Reviewers report

Title: Better Palliative Care for people with a Dementia: Summary of Interdisciplinary Workshop Highlighting Current Gaps and Recommendations for Future Research

Version: 0 Date: 12 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Abraham Brody

Reviewers report:

I greatly appreciate the authors intent of seeking to highlight the need for greater research in palliative care in dementia, and focusing in several specific areas. While the discussion here will not be of surprise to those of us who work within this field, it is important to raise the visibility of this issue more broadly.

That being said, I had difficulty making my way through this paper because of its formatting and lack of clarity. Overall, the results read more like a thought piece. It is unclear overall whether the results are summaries of the discussion of the conference sessions or opinions of the writers. There is no clear methodology for how the meeting was summarized in the methods, it was not using pure methodologic means such as transcribed tapes and qualitative analysis. Therefore, this is somewhat of a hybrid paper and it is unclear where the authors opinions stop and the attendees discussions begin. The paper would overall benefit from a different format, as it could be a summary of the proceedings but labeling this as methods and results doesn't seem to be appropriate given the lack of a true methodology for developing the paper.

It is also unclear to me whether item results 1 and 2 are developed as a result of the discussions occurring at the meeting. Alternatively, were they used for framing at the conference, or are being used as framing for the article. This has implications both for where it should sit in the paper and how it should be interpreted.

Additionally, I don't quite understand how Hodges model frames this work from the writeup is provided. This needs to be significantly edited to make it more applied to palliative care in dementia.

The authors use the overarching term of "palliative care" but do not define it and it is unclear what modalities of palliative care they are referring to: Primary palliative, specialist palliative,
hospice care or some mixture of these and new models? Please clarify in the background as well as defining palliative care in general.

Finally, How were the main three topics chosen?

Minor:

Email address is wrong for Dr. Karen Dening on title page, lists Dr. Irving’s email.

Abstract conclusions are listed as research questions but are termed recommendations. Needs to be rewritten for consistency.

A study from the U.S. shows that while the # of cases of dementia may increase significantly with aging population, we may be seeing prevalence rates decrease, possibly due to better cardiovascular care. This should be discussed in the background. (JAMA Intern Med. 2017;177(1):51-58. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.6807)

Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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