Reviewer’s report

Title: Socio-cultural contexts of end-of-life conversations and decisions: bereaved family cancer caregivers’ retrospective co-constructions

Version: 0 Date: 05 Dec 2016

Reviewer: Karin Oechsle

Reviewer's report:

The authors present a qualitative study of four mini focus group interviews with 13 female bereaved family caregivers concerning social-cultural aspects of end-of-life conversations and decisions in cancer patients in Kenya, Africa.

The evaluating these interesting palliative care issues in African patients who might different significantly from European or American patients due to their specific culture represents the main strength of this study. A first view on these cultural contexts seems to be clinically interesting.

In contrast, the study has some relevant deficits. In my opinion, the number of 13 interviewed family caregivers trends to be too low. Unfortunately, there is no explanation of the methodical rational for this number of interviewed persons in the manuscript. In addition, no methodical rationale for the different durations of focus group interviews is given.

Further, only female family caregivers have been included. Especially in the cultural context, the perspective of male family caregivers should have been included.

The time between the patients’ death and the focus group interviews should be presented.

In my opinion, the presentation of results is too long. Further, it gives rather the impression of a qualitative analysis of a case series than a systematic analysis of focus group interviews.

Overall, the manuscript might be suitable for publication in BMC palliative care after major revision declaring the above mentions limitations and deficits more clearly.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

Unable to assess

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

Yes

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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