Reviewer's report

Title: Religious leaders' perceptions of advance care planning: a secondary analysis of interviews with Buddhist Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Sikh and Bahá’í leaders

Version: 0 Date: 03 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Mieke Vermandere

Reviewer's report:

Congratulations to the authors with this interesting and relevant manuscript. I am convinced of the methodological rigour of it, but I missed information at certain levels. I have read the manuscript with the COREQ checklist beside me, and I could not find an answer to the following questions:

Domain 1: research team and reflexitivity:

- Which authors conducted the interviews?

- What were the researchers credentials? E.g. PhD, MD

- What was their occupation at the time of the study?

- Was the researcher male or female?

- What experience or training did the researcher have?

- Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?

- What characteristics were reported about the interviewer?
Domain 2: study design:

- How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?

- Where was the data collected? e.g. home, clinic, workplace

- Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many?

- Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?

- Were field notes made during and/or after the interview?

- What was the duration of the interviews?

- Was data saturation discussed?

Domain 3: analysis and findings

- Did authors provide a description of the coding tree? (I would have liked to see the coding tree)

- Did participants provide feedback on the findings? (I don't think the findings were given back to the participants?)

- Quotations presented: there are some quotations in the results section, but not enough. It seems a bit like 'cherry picking'. I would like to see more and longer quotations, to illustrate each paragraph and theme. There are some quotations in Table 2; I would delete this table, this has no added value, but I would keep the subthemes in this table (1a, 1b; 2a, ...) and put these themes as subtitles in the results section. The quotations from table 2 would also fit in the results section, to illustrate the themes and subthemes.

- The major themes are clearly presented, but not the minor themes. As I wrote above, it could help to make subtitles in the results section.
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.

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I declare that I have no competing interests