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: 16 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Joep van de Geer

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Exploring study on a relevant topic for health care professionals working in multi-faith and multicultural societies. Manuscript needs

1. The first part of the title seems to promise more than can be delivered. 'Religious leaders' conceptualisation of ACP' seems too strong since the authors state in the first sentence of the abstracts' results that 'Religious leaders had varying levels of ACP understanding with most supporting the concept ..... after it was explained.'

2. The abstract could benefit from some improvements, e.g. the methods section of the abstract includes results, the results section is formulated rather vague and could be more specific. Presenting the results as 'Varying levels..., diverse approaches..., multiple ways of interpreting...' do not encourage to read further. The result that 'They recommended that health professionals acquire "broad" knowledge of …' is not supported in the text, where this theme is specified as "general knowledge". The conclusion section of the abstract now describes recommendations for religious leaders rol in ACP and for further research, but that is not very strong supported by the presented data and could be left out of the abstract to give room for more specific conclusions.

3. The background is well documented with 55 references, not all of which are necessary. However, the specific difficulties clinicians encounter can be elaborated more, illustrating the relevance of this study.

4. At the end of the background the aims of this study could be described more extensive: 'related but different research aims' is again rather vague and does not follow necessarily from the introduction.

5. The primary study is well described in the Methods section, which is helpful for the reader to understand the context of this secondary analysis. However, the methods described for the study presented in this manuscript do not give enough information
about the process of data analyzing. Data saturation is not discussed. What were the researcher created labels and categories? An example of the coding tree is missing.

6. Although it is not possible to present all data and findings, the reader needs to be able to follow the process of identifying the three themes, and nine categories.

7. The presented results are clearly illustrated in the three themes and categories of table 2.

8. The discussion section needs improvement: new findings are presented in stead of interpreted.

9. In the strengths an limitations section another even 'interesting finding' is described.

10. When the aims of this study are better described, the conclusions can be improved.

Conclusion: manuscript needs improvements before publication is advised.

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.

Yes

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

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