Reviewer’s report

Title: What does 'complex' mean in palliative care? Triangulating qualitative findings from 3 settings

Version: 0 Date: 12 May 2017

Reviewer: Stephen Connor

Reviewer's report:

Determining the need for specialist palliative care is an important topic that needs closer scrutiny. Most seriously ill patients should be able to be cared for by primary or secondary professionals with community support. This study is a qualitative examination of the concept of complexity from the viewpoint of specialist and generalist professionals. It is a somewhat small but well thought out study. The results are what we might expect to see but there is so little published on this topic that the findings do add to our knowledge. Complexity can indeed be in one or many dimensions and is certainly complicated by psychosocial and spiritual factors. I would have liked the authors to make some more concrete recommendations regarding how we can get the bulk of primary clinicians trained in basics of palliative care, which we all know is the problem but we are not making enough progress solving. There are a couple of mistakes in the manuscript to correct (305 & 383) but otherwise thank you for this contribution.

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?
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