Reviewer’s report

Title: Continuous Palliative Sedation for Patients with Advanced Cancer at a Tertiary Care Cancer Center

Version: 0 Date: 13 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Christoph Ostgathe

Reviewer’s report:

Dear authors and editors,

thank you very much for the possibility to review the manuscript "Palliative Sedation for Patients at a tertiary Care Cancer Center". I read the paper with interest. The science and statistics seems to be sound however it might benefit from some adaptations. My findings and queries in detail:

Title:

What the authors describe, is as a strategy a (deep) continuous palliative sedation. Here - from my perspective - the whole paper should be clearer. If that is acceptable to the authors this may lead to an adapted title, e.g. "Continuous Palliative Sedation for Patients at a tertiary Care Cancer Center" or even "Deep Continuous Palliative Sedation for Patients at a tertiary Care Cancer Center"

Background

Line 66: The authors discuss the variability of prevalence of sedation. I would add differences in concepts and definitions as another important cause for the existing variation.

Material and Methods

Line 85/86: better "Currently, a mobile multidisciplinary team … inpatient population. (delete "as a mobile interdisciplinary team")

Line 99: Does prognosis play a role? Is the decision about artificial hydration and nutrition part of the standardized approach?

Line 100: better to delete "to" after "out"

Results

Table 2: what does the "incurable" implicate in regard to "metastastic" or "locally advanced". I assume that the majority of the dying patients were suffering from an incurable disease.

Line 167: better only one digit after the dot (7.9% rather than 7.88%)
Line 169: better "received" than "used"

Line 176/177: the authors state that there is a trend towards longer sedation time. Is the p value correct? Than it would not be trend.

Line 178: "from" instead of "form"

Line 179: This is a repetition of the Line 167 and could be omitted here. Better than in the next sentence. "The group receiving neuroleptics had the shortest …"

Discussion:

Overall the authors should concentrate here on the main findings and not repeat what is stated already in the results (e.g. Lines 212-214; 221-223)

Line 209: "… were sufficient to maintain adequate pain control." This was not part of the analysis!

Addiothal Files: "Methadone" instead of "Metadone"

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

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