Reviewer’s report

Title: Differences in Do-Not-Resuscitate Orders, Hospice Care Utilization, and Late Referral to Hospice Care between Cancer and Non-cancer Decedents in a Tertiary Hospital in Taiwan between 2010 and 2015: A Hospital-Based Observational Study

Version: 0 Date: 28 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Bernard Fikkers

Reviewer's report:

I feel this is an interesting study, although quite lengthy. Therefore, I needed lots of concentration to follow the reasoning, in particular the results and the discussion. But in the end, I think the facts were well supported by the discussion.

Please be careful that "duration of survival" and "days of survival" are used both.

Specific questions and remarks:

- Please number the pages!

- Page 3. As far as I know "Dr. med (in the case of Tzeng-Ji Chen) is a German abbreviation. Why is this used? Why not only MD?

- Page 5, line 42. "Further measurements...." I believe "Further guidelines..." is more clear in this context.

- Page 6, line 28. The problem with DNR is that, in my opinion, this is not the right question. In the Netherlands, there is a lot of discussion (in particular by Smulders and Bosch) who argue that DNR should not be the discriminating question; it is far better to ask about patients wishes and expectations. Even a patient with metastatic cancer may have a short trial of resucitation after sudden aspiration or acute congestive heart failure, but not after deep septic shock. Anyway, that is probably a separate discussion, but may deserve some attention.

- Page 12, line 12. I don't know the "Jonckheere-Terpstra test". Maybe some explanation for the ordinary reader would be useful? (From google: "The Jonckheere-Terpstra test is a rank-based nonparametric test that can be used to determine if there is a statistically significant trend between an ordinal independent variable and a continuous or ordinal dependent variable. The Jonckheere-Terpstra test tests for an ordered difference in medians where you need to state the direction of this order").
- Page 13, line 9 and 57. Are the bold sentences subheadings? To improve readability, please write DNR (instead of do-not-resuscitate).

- Page 13, line 35 and line 41. I find those two sentences quite confusing to read: it almost seems contradictory. Please rephrase or explain better.

- Page 15, Discussion. This is very lengthy, although very complete. Is it possible to make this more concise and to-the-point?

- Page 19, line 39. In this sentence, please leave out "also" (now used twice in one sentence).

- Page 25, references. Please write all the reference alike, so please rewrite reference 4, 5, 6, 12, 18, 19, 23 and 25 (with only initials).

Page 29 table. Is it possible to make a figure explaining the numbers from the results (8459 --> 6746 + 1713 --> etc.)?

**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 recommend additional statistical review

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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