Reviewer’s report

Title: Barriers and Facilitators to the Implementation of a Paediatric Palliative Care Team

Version: 1 Date: 10 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Joel E Frader

Reviewer’s report:

While the authors have made major efforts to revise the manuscript, I remain concerned about the following. The response rate to the survey was indeed low and the absence of information about the respondents (e.g., which profession) makes interpretation of the responses problematic. The nature of the survey is very general and the lack of more expansive comments for the open-ended questions leaves a great deal unknown. The information learned from the respondents seems quite specific to the setting and it remains unclear whether the data could be readily applied to different hospitals, different health care systems in different countries, and so on. The authors note, for example (page 5, line 114) "The main treating clinician in the tertiary hospital has the final responsibility for adequate PPC for the children in the hospital and at home." However, home hospice care in many systems becomes the primary responsibility of hospice and palliative care clinicians, whether pediatric or otherwise. Also, the authors indicate that they did not ask about some organizational issues which might be very different in different settings. In parts of the U.S., the lack of adequate financing for home palliative and hospice care for children is a major deterrent to the delivery of adequate PPC services. The authors also state that establishing "formal agreements" for the use of PPC could aid development of such programs. However, without first building relationships of trust with subspecialty clinicians who might refer patients for PPC, it is not obvious how formal arrangements would work.

The revision does a better job of communicating in English, though some parts of the manuscript remain very difficult to understand, e.g., the first two sentences of "Results" section of the abstract are quite confusing and unclear. In addition, the authors could have done a more thorough job of exploring the existing literature. For example, they state (page 4, line 80) "Until now only a few barriers and challenges for the implementation of PPCTs are identified" whereas there has been specific discussion of this as well as specifics of program development in other publications, e.g., Chapter 8 of Wolfe, Hinds, and Sourkes (eds) Textbook of Interdisciplinary Pediatric Palliative Care; Chapter 3 in the first edition of Carter and Levetown (eds) Palliative Care for Infants, Children, and Adolescents and elsewhere.

Overall, the authors deserve commendation for conducting a systematic assessment of what helped and what might have hindered the development of their program. Nevertheless, the results have limited generalizability and much of what they report does not provide information beyond what is already in the literature. The actual manuscript still needs editorial work.

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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Yes

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No

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