Reviewer's report

Title: "I Always Tried to Forget about the Condition and Pretend I was Healed": Coping with Cervical Cancer in Rural Ghana

Version: 2 Date: 30 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Eve Namisango

Reviewer's report:

This paper addresses an important research question.

Some few comments for consideration.

Background:

Line 55 -56: However, in most patients, there may be no symptoms at all whatsoever until the disease is at the advanced stage—this sentence should be referenced.

The background should include some statistics about the magnitude of the problem (cervical cancer) and the associated burden.

Methods

There some results in the methods section, which should be moved to the right section [lines 90-100].

The main concern with this paper is the sample size, even if saturation were considered [which is lacking in the methods section], one needs a reasonable sample for this type of research question to demonstrate saturation. With 15 patients, how sure would one be that all important concepts are captured for the population of interest; there is reason to be concerned that the population interviewed may not contain a representative sample a limitation which should be acknowledged as we cannot be sure of what would have been observed if more individuals were included.

Sampling: Was any purposive criteria considered to ensure some degree of sampling variability?

I would advise the authors to consider a theoretical l saturation appraisal, if the concepts identified are sufficient then this should be stated, else one would be impelled to recruit more people to do justice to the research question.
Data analysis: This section is way too brief and lacks important details. For example, was the data solely coded by one person? If yes, this should be revisited, there should be some checks - having a second person review codes etc. It is also not clear how the coding frame used in the analysis was generated.

Results: The study response rate should be stated.

The authors should consider including a limitations section and acknowledge any potential biases and methodological limitations and the extent to which they can affect the interpretation of the results.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal