Reviewer’s report

Title: A painful experience of limited understanding: Healthcare professionals' experiences with palliative care of people with severe dementia in Norwegian nursing homes

Version: 0 Date: 17 Dec 2017

Reviewer: Ladislav Volicer

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript describes results of phenomenological study reporting experiences of nurses caring for residents with advanced dementia in four Norwegian nursing homes. While it is interesting, it needs some modifications before it is suitable for publication. After reading the manuscript, I believe that there are three separate issues that are painful for the nurses. They are coping with behavioral symptoms of dementia, providing palliative care, and coping with transfer of residents from the sheltered unit to somatic long-term unit. It would make the paper more informative if these issues were clearly differentiated.

1. Behavioral symptoms of dementia. It should be explained what these symptoms are and that one of the most disturbing one is rejection of care (this name should be used because rejection alone does not describe what is happening). It would be useful to include strategies that the nurse use in coping with the behavioral symptoms, if they reported those during the interviews.

2. Palliative care. Which medical procedures were limited if the family agreed to palliative care? Were behavioral interventions used before drug use?

3. Transfer. What was the reason for the policy that requires transfer of residents from the sheltered unit to somatic long-term unit? How did the care differ in these two settings?

The abstract should have a more informative section of results and conclusions should be only one or two sentences. There is no need for long explanation of Godamer's theory because it does not seem to be related to better understanding of residents.

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.

No

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:

Acceptable

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