Reviewer’s report

Title: A review of paper-based advance care planning aids

Version: 0 Date: 03 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Salimah H Meghani

Reviewer's report:

This paper has potential to make a significant contribution. The methods are innovative; the qualitative procedures used for content analyses and characterizing paper-based ACP decision aids are generally rigorous. The results are informative. The following comments apply based on my review:

Methods:

The procedures pertaining to the stakeholder summit may be clarified further. What was included in the representative sample of 7 aids? How was the representative sample determined? How was the stakeholder input utilized in the analyses and synthesis? This latter point is not very clear.

How was unpublished and grey literature identified?

Is there a gap in the identification of the published literature since the included systematic review (Aslakson 2015) and this review?

How many aids were identified using grey literature? This may have implications for how widely these may be used.

Exclusion of advance directives:

Exclusion criteria of advance directives needs to be qualified more clearly in the text and the Figure 1. Page 2 lines 57-58: The authors state that "General advance directives, such as a state-sanctioned living will or advance directive form, were excluded from the study". Figure 1 also illustrates "advance directives" as an exclusion. However, the table 2 lists "Five Wishes"—which qualifies as an advance directive document in all 50 states. I believe, to be consistent, "general advance directive" language may be eliminated and exclusion may be "state-sanctioned AD".
Results:

The presentation of the results may be improved. It is not clear which specific aids/set of aids are referred to in the text (pages 4-7).

Also, to improve replicability of the study, the authors should provide specific site links/or references for each of the aids in Table 2; especially given that some of the names of the aids are very generic (e.g. Advance Care Planning (8); Living Will (13).

The presentation of Figure 2 can be improved (e.g. denominator/%); Also, what is "not addressed" referring to? I understood it was an exclusion if ACP was not addressed in the aids.

Year of publication of the aids or some indicator of if these aids are currently in use or available may be relevant in Table 2, especially given that these are paper-based and newer aids are expected to be more web-based.

Minor:

Reference needed on page 2. Line 53 (Cochrane review of decision aids)

Table 1. Delete "name of the producer"

Table 3. Check spelling of quotation under "Category"

Hope these comments will be helpful in refining the manuscript.

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.

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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