Author’s response to reviews

Title: Exploring attitudes toward physician-assisted death in patients with life-limiting illnesses with varying experiences of palliative care: A pilot study

Authors:
Patricia Hizo-Abes (phizoabes@gmail.com)
Lauren Siegel (lsiegel2@uwo.ca)
Gil Schreier (Gil.Schreier@lhsc.on.ca)

Version: 2 Date: 29 Nov 2017

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for sending along these minor revisions. Please see our response to each reviewer point below.

Thank you,

Dr. Hizo-Abes, Dr. Schreier, Ms. Siegel

Major revisions required

* I still think that there is an issue with the time frame - whilst I recognize that this is in line with the 10 day waiting period - to me this is not the issue. The issue is that it is not realistic for the impact of the palliative care intervention for those new to palliative care to be realized in that time frame. This should be discussed.
Response: Thank you for pointing this out. We agree this is a limitation and have added the following to address this issue “Additionally, the new palliative care group may have had as few as one encounter with a palliative care provider during the 10-day period between surveys. This may not be an adequate amount of time to fully realize the impact of palliative care. ” (Strengths and Limitations, page 16, lines 19-21).

* I still think your conclusions are too strong for a pilot study, and without ongoing exposure to palliative care. e.g. you start your discussion with the sentences 'Our results suggest....." whereas in the conclusions you have written it in a more appropriate manner e.g. "This pilot study suggests that...."

Response: We agree with your point and have made the following changes:

Discussion, page 13, line 4: “Our results” changed to “The results of this pilot study”

Discussion, page 15, line 6: “The current study found” to “The current pilot found”

* In your conclusion you start talking about an expanded definition of palliative care and I don't think this is appropriate on the basis of a small pilot study and should be removed.

Response: Thank you. The statement has been removed (Conclusions, page 18, lines 18-19)