Reviewer’s report

Title: Potential quality indicators for seriously ill home care clients: A cross-sectional analysis using Resident Assessment Instrument for Home Care (RAI-HC) data for Ontario

Version: 0 Date: 04 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Lia Salam-White

Reviewer’s report:

The paper needs to be proof-read one more time, by someone other than the author, to pick up some errors ex. grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

1. Abstract says it looked at RAI-HCs completed between 2009 to 2013 but under the methods/sample section it says 2006 to 2013.

2. In the abstract, methods section says "consolation" instead of "consultation"

3. Background section, you name a few diagnoses but then say that end of life care would be relevant for those with "all" types of serious illness...should be using the word "different" as you can't make a conclusion saying "all" when research was about a few diagnoses.

4. Background section, first paragraph - seriously ill clients should be defined right away rather than waiting until the methods section to understand who makes up this group

5. This paper defines palliative care and makes a lot of comparisons to other research for palliative care patients, however, it fails to mention if the patients in the study were actually "palliative" - did they have an SRC 95 code to identify them as palliative on home care, or were they on specific palliative care caseloads or just regular community caseloads? Those on palliative caseloads or community caseloads with SRC 95 might have different outcomes- which would maybe change the findings

6. interRAI-PC is used in most regions for palliative care patients, wondering why this assessment was not used?

7. Background section, third paragraph, first sentence should say "was to develop a set" remove the word "of" in there

8. 14 geographic regions is mentioned a few times, but for those outside of Ontario they might not know that the 14 regions represent LHINs. Should probably have a brief description about this.

9. Methods, Sample section - mentions 'intake' assessment, should word this differently so all readers understand that the assessment completed at time of admission to home care was not used, but rather the second assessment after being on service for a while was used...etc.
10. Methods, Sample section - when defining the seriously ill client population you use the abbreviation "CHESS" when it is not mentioned in any sections before...reader has to continue to read to know what that stands for.

11. Methods, Measures section - should put the abbreviations after describing them "DRS" and "CPS"

12. Analysis section - the abbreviation SI is used in the second paragraph but that was not used as an abbreviation in brackets anywhere before to allow the reader to know it stands for "seriously ill"

13. Analysis section - mentions using a change in odds of at least 20% (1.20 to 0.83) but then mentions only keeping covarities with odds of 1.30 to 0.77 wondering why it wasn't kept at 20%?

14. Table 2 title "Seriously-ill" but in the paper that word is not capitalized so should stick to one way of writing it

15. Results section, last paragraph, CPS and ADL should be abbreviated rather than spelled out since you've already described them

16. Discussion, second paragraph should say "current"

17. Discussion, fourth paragraph, should say "than the comparison group" rather than "other clients"

18. Discussion, fourth paragraph - how do you know that they were not already receiving a palliative approach to care? There are many patients on regular community caseloads who receive palliative care with an SRC 95 and so they don't have to be on palliative caseloads

19. Limitations should include the fact that you were not able to identify whether patients were receiving palliative home care services ex. palliative nursing, palliative caseload and that if the research was done on patients known to be receiving palliative care services/on palliative caseloads/community caseload with SRC 95/assessed with an interRAI-PC then perhaps the findings would be different

20. Did you look at their length of stay on home care? The difference from the first assessment to the second to see if those QIs improved?

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

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