Reviewer’s report

Title: How to conserve dignity in palliative care: Suggestions from older patients, significant others, and health care professionals in Swedish municipal care

Version: 0 Date: 02 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Maja De Brito

Reviewer's report:

This is a qualitative study, looking at the Dignity Intervention model and which aimed to review the existing care actions based on the model and explored the need to broaden the list of these actions for the needs of the Swedish health care context. The paper is nicely written; however, I found the Results section a bit long and maybe a bit blunt as it is 12 pages of merely listing the care actions. To make paper more interesting and easier to follow, I would suggest different organization of the results and maybe consider presenting them in a table (listing the general and specific actions) accompanied with short description and some illustrative quotes. This would give a clearer overview of the results. Besides this, my main worry is the sample. It is not clear what the sampling frame was, and the authors do not reflect on small sample size. The sample size is not justified at all and is poorly described (Authors at one point comment that they did not find any cultural differences, however they do not provide the reader with any information about the cultural background in palliative care context in Sweden in general and, most importantly, within the sample.) Also, I suggest the authors improve the reporting of the study according to criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ or other if it suits better the design of the study).

Please, replace the word "elderly" with "older". Elderly is less acceptable term as it is considered pejorative.

Following are some specific comments:

Abstract: Aim of the study is not mentioned in the abstract. Specify whom were the interviews and focus groups conducted with. Please include information about sample size in the results section and some description of the sample. Results in general are not clear to me. It was only after reading the whole article, that I understood better. The first sentence of the conclusion is merely a repetition of the results. I would suggest shortening the conclusions and increase the word count in the results.

Background: Lines 65-66 -I don't understand what this means. Line 100-102 - What care actions? Care actions people experienced during their palliative care trajectory or care actions as they think would be useful? Were they asked to reflect on their experiences or on their preferences? In general, for me the aim is not clear. Please confirm the first sentence of this review and see if I understood it correctly.
Sample and setting: The two paragraphs should be included in the beginning of the Results. What I would expect in "Sample and setting" section is how the sample selection was made, how the recruitment was done, what was the sampling frame, how was the sample size decided upon, was the setting urban or rural, was this a typical palliative care setting or does it differ in some important aspect, a brief description of the institutions involved.

Were the significant others carers of the patients who participated? In line 143 authors say they were interviewed individually. Does that mean separately? Or were the significant others present when the patient was being interviewed?

Discussion: Paragraph with lines 487 to 492 is standing out a bit. Try to integrated better within the flow of the Discussion.

Line 148-150, with the exception of the text about the transcription (this is part of the Analysis), should be in results. Professional transcribers are known to make many mistakes while transcribing. Were transcriptions reread alongside listening to the recordings? Line 494 - Authors should be careful on commenting cultural differences as they do not provide any information about this. It should be added in the Results, in the sample description. In methodological considerations the authors do not reflect on small sample size and what this could mean for their results. I also missed a reflection on the extent of transferability of the results to the overall Swedish context. Since the study is a part of a validation process, this should be one of the most important considerations.

Figure: I may be wrong, but the Figure seems like a copy of the original, like it was published in the original source. If this is so, please, confirm you have the rights to use it.

Availability of data: Authors mention that the dataset is not available due to protection of confidentiality. Again, I may be wrong, but following the GDPR, the dataset should be anonymised. Please confirm your dataset in prepared and stored according to the regulation. The note about all data being used in the analysis should be included in the Results section.

I wish the authors successful DCI-SWE adaptation process and all best in their future work.

**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.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
Unable to assess

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

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
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.