Reviewer’s report

Title: Factor Structure of the Quality of Children's Palliative Care Instrument when Completed by Parents of Children with Cancer

Version: 0 Date: 06 Nov 2018

Reviewer: Eva Bergstraesser

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this important and interesting manuscript on an innovative instrument to measure the quality of palliative care in children suffering from cancer.

There are some shortcomings, particularly within the methods, that need clarification and revision.

1) Methods - The instrument was developed out of the existing QCECI; however, the process is described only briefly. The selection of items seems to be based on the selection of three of the authors only. Pretesting was only performed with one parent who completed the score before the instrument was used in the main sample. As the goal of this new instrument is very different to the prior one, this pretesting might not be rigid enough. The authors should give reasons for this procedure.

2) Confirmatory factor analysis instead of exploratory factor analysis was chosen. This decision should be explained briefly.

3) Methods - It is mentioned (Data collection line 29-31) that data collection occurred before and after an educational intervention, however this intervention is not described throughout the manuscript. This Intervention also occurs in the discussion (4th page line 31: The primary objective of our study was to assess the impact of an educational intervention,...). If this would be the primary goal, the title of the paper would be misleading, and again, the educational intervention is not described.

4) Methods - Probably related to the educational interventions the structure of the study is not clear. What was the reason to choose two data collection periods?

5) Methods - To mix data from two time points (data analysis line 45) to increase the sample size for assessing psychometric properties seems to be risky. The argumentation for this step is rather short and should be more detailed. Was the sample of two time points homogeneous enough to allow this step?

6) Methods - Data analysis - The authors refer to a submitted manuscript for further information on data analysis. This is not reasonable - please either describe data analysis or refer to an accepted manuscript.
Minor points
1) Results - line 51 - "Approximately 580 families were approached…" - please provide an exact number.

2) Results, confirmatory factor analysis - line 53 - instead of Table 2 - it should be Table 3 if I got it correctly.

3) Just a remark - the very small group of CNS tumors is surprising - the authors could comment on this briefly.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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