Author’s response to reviews

Title: Healthcare professionals’ views of palliative care for American war veterans with nonmalignant respiratory disease living in a rural area: a qualitative study

Authors:

Clare Mcveigh (clare.mcveigh@qub.ac.uk)

Joanne Reid (j.reid@qub.ac.uk)

Paula Carvalho (paula.carvalho@va.gov)

Version: 2 Date: 05 Nov 2018

Author’s response to reviews:

Response to Editor

Manuscript (PCAR-S-18-00066)

Authors

Dr Clare Mc Veigh (clare.mcveigh@qub.ac.uk)

Professor Joanne Reid (j.reid@qub.ac.uk)

Professor Paula Carvalho (paula.carvalho@va.gov)

Dear Editor

I am pleased to resubmit for publication the revised version of manuscript (PCAR-S-18-00066) "Healthcare professionals’ views of palliative care for American war veterans with non-malignant respiratory disease living in a rural area: a qualitative study.” We are very grateful to you, the editorial team and the expert reviewers for taking the time to review our manuscript and for providing valuable and constructive comments. We provide a point-by-point response to each comment below.
Thank you

Dr Clare Mc Veigh

Response to Editor Comments:

Abstract

1) Put COPD in full in abstract – amended, Pg. 2 line 24

2) Change “This study aimed to explore palliative care provision for veterans with non-malignant respiratory disease, and their family carers, living in a rural area of America” to “This study aimed to explore healthcare professionals’ views of palliative care provision for veterans with non-malignant respiratory disease, and their family carers, living in a rural area of America”. – amended, pg. 2 lines 29-31

3) Results – line 39 – apostrophe is in wrong place on veterans’ (you have it as veteran’s – suggesting only one veteran) - amended, Pg. 2 line 40

4) Please keep abstract within the 350 word count (there are some non-essential words that could be removed if need be, to accommodate the above changes) – 321 words

5) Can you find another word for one of the “particulars” in “A particular barrier also related to this particular patient population…” ” – replace the first one with “specific”? – changed to specific pg. 2 line 41

6) Can you find another word for one of the “platforms” in “Findings indicated that telemedicine may be a beneficial platform to which palliative care can be provided to veterans with NMRD, and their family carers, in rural areas using a digital platform” – replace the first one with “mechanism”? – changed to mechanism pg. 2 line 48
Introduction

7) Line 66 - remove gap between hyphen and malignant in “Non- Malignant” – amended pg. 3 line 67

8) Line 72 – apostrophe in wrong place as wording of sentence suggest singular patient – should be “…patient’s needs”- amended pg. 3 line 73

Methods

9) Table 1 – please line up the rows (top right cell is very large but largely empty) – amended pg. 6 line 139

10) Fig 1 – justify all text to left as some is centred which creates gaps – amended pg. 7 lines 158-180

11) Fig 1 – remove spaces between equals sign and number 4 on two instances (n= 4 should be n=4) – amended pg. 7 lines 158-180

12) Line 188 – change “training on qualitative” to “training in qualitative” - amended pg. 8 line 191

13) Not sure how a note taker aids “accurate recording of focus groups” – a note taker would, however, be able to record non-verbal behaviours or act as a backup should audio-recording fail. – Amended pg. 8 lines 192 and 193.

14) Data analysis – incomplete sentence “Data were analysed by adopting a thematic analysis framework described by [22]” – amended pg. 9 lines 211 and 212.
15) Ethical considerations – this sentence should be changed to past tense “Any paper work produced throughout the focus group process is being held in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room, whilst any information stored on a computer is password protected” – amended pg. 10 lines 227-229.

Results

16) This sentence needs a reference at the end “Holloway and Wheeler highlighted that this uncovers the meaning behind participants’ feelings and actions, and also allows for any reader of the study to decide if the research results can be applied across other settings.” – amended pg. 10 line 242

17) Table 3 – justify text in column one to the left currently centred) – amended pg. 11 line 246

18) Line 261 – tense needs changing on “can cause feelings of distress” – should be “could” as data collected in the past – amended pg. 11 line 264

19) Sometimes you use” healthcare professionals” (e.g. line 281), sometimes “HCPs” (e.g. line 312) – please be consistent. These are just examples – it occurs throughout the manuscript. The preference is for you not to abbreviate. – Full term now used throughout

20) Line 312 – replace one of the “often”s with an alternative word (or remove one) in: “Some HCPs conveyed that often veterans with NMRD are often reluctant to accept palliative” – “frequently” maybe? Or “commonly”? – deleted one ‘often’ pg. 13 line 315

21) Line 347 – needs to be past tense (need for attention to tenses was also commented on by one of the reviewers) “Participants also perceived that veterans with NMRD are less likely to receive the appropriate level of palliative care services that they require if they live in rural areas” should be “Participants also perceived that veterans with NMRD were less likely to receive the appropriate level of palliative care services that they required if they lived in rural areas” – amended pg. 14 lines 350 and 351
22) Line 367 – please specify what the gap referred to in this sentence is as it is currently unclear… “It was indicated that the gap in specialist palliative care physicians may be due to a lack of incentive for clinicians to specialise in palliative care” – is it a gap in the number of physicians? Please reword for clarity. – changed to shortage for clarity pg. 15 line 371

23) Line 431 – reference explaining what telemedicine is should be in the discussion, not in the results (“Telemedicine can be defined as the delivery of healthcare services and information through a digital platform (Kvedar et al. 2014)”). – moved to discussion pg. 20 lines 530 and 531

Discussion

24) Line 473 – need to say “in this American locality” in the sentence “Furthermore, our findings illuminated that in America this impeded…” unless this is a national referral criterion. – amended pg. 18 line 476

25) Line 524 – change “…that would be beneficial in…” to “…that might be beneficial in…”

Limitations – amended pg. 20 line 527

26) Line 554 – add in informal carers to this sentence “Findings only represented the perspectives of HCPs and not the patient’s own perspective” - amended pg. 21 line 558

27) Are there likely to have been any changes in palliative care provision since the data was collected in September 2014? As that was over four years ago some comment on this would be helpful. – Comment added to pg. 21-22 lines 560 – 563.

Other

28) Are you confident that the facility, and therefore the individuals, are non-identifiable? If not, please make revisions to ensure participants are non-identifiable e.g. do you need to say it was in Boise? Can you say something like “rural Idaho” or just “Idaho”? – Boise removed throughout and left as ‘Idaho’
29) You use the term “family carers” – are all carers family? Suggest revise to “informal carers” to capture friends and neighbours that may also support the patient. - amended throughout