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

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Version: 4 Date: 07 Feb 2019

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Manuscript (PCAR-S-18-00066)

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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 McVeigh

Response to Editor Comments

1. Section Headers
   - Change introduction to background
     Page 3, Line 63
   - Insert a declarations header underneath list of abbreviations
     Page 22, line 563

2. Figures
   Please remove figures and upload as separate files and remove figure legends, list separately at the end of the manuscript.
   Figure one now as a separate file and to be inserted on Page 6, line 155

3. Ethical Approval and consent to participate
   In this declarations subsection, please clearly indicate which IRBs have provided approval and include reference numbers.
   Now included on Page 23, Lines 591 and 592

4. Funding
   Clarify the role of funding body regarding the development, data collection, analysis and write-up of study.
   Now clarified on Page 22, Line 572 – 574
5. Clean Version

Clean version uploaded

Response to Requested Revisions

1. Where is Idaho in the USA and how representative is it of a rural area in the USA?
Page 4, Lines 102-105

2. Questions about the methodology – the focus groups seem quite small – what is the definition of a focus group size as (n=3, n=2, n=4, n=4, n=3) seem quite small numbers?
Supporting sentence and reference added Page 7, Lines 159 and 160.

3. I was not entirely clear what the “broad interpretivist approach was utilised” is – another sentence of explanation would be helpful for the reader. Therefore how Table 3 was arrived at and so the opening results; “Analysis of the healthcare professional focus groups identified two key overarching themes: 1) barriers to providing appropriate palliative care to veterans with NMRD; and 2) future direction of palliative care for veterans with NMRD. The overarching and interpretative themes are outlined in Table 3.”
Sentence added Page 5, Lines 117-120

4. For verbatim comments anonymity was maintained - Although I note that there was only one social worker and case manager – could these be identified from the Pseudonym allocated e.g. SW1 in particular and Case Manager CM1?
The research team are confident that participants are unidentifiable from their pseudonym as there are many social workers and case managers within the area the study was conducted.