Reviewer’s report

Title: Patient experiences of nurse-facilitated Advance Care Planning in a general practice setting: a qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 11 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Amy Tan

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this well-written manuscript on an interesting study. I have a few questions/clarifications that I would recommend to the authors and the editor to be addressed to help with clarifying important points in this manuscript.

Some minor clarifications:

1) I would appreciate knowing what the training background of GPNs in Australia is, to provide context for this manuscript, as well as for readers internationally to understand the skill-set for GPNs used in this study.

2) There is an abbreviation in the Background paragraph 4 - NSW - I'm assuming this is New South Wales- please define in your paper?

3) I find it very surprising that 83% of all Australians went to a GP office within the one cited year. Are these 83% of rostered patients within one year, or the entire Australian population? I would recommend confirming this statistic and what the denominator is, as it seems very high for any one year.

Revisions suggested:


5) How were the GPN's recruited? Was it voluntary, within the practices recruited, or was there an expectation by the employer? As well, what was the relationship between the GPNs in the practice with the GPs in the clinic (assuming that the GPs were the owners of the practices? Was there any compensation other than their employment wages/salaries for being part of this study for the GPNs? What criteria existed for the GPNs to be selected for them to participate or just by virtue of working in a GP office?

6) For the selection of patients, you detail that you used SPICT vs opportunistically. Can you comment on whether you found that these two methods of selection may have caused selection
of 2 divergent populations in general practice- because SPICT would likely lead to a more symptomatic or more frail population to be selected, vs. likely a more healthy/functionally able population via opportunistic selection by presenting to a GP practice. How did this affect your results and analysis and conclusions?

7) I would have liked to know more details on the actual content of training sessions and subsequent visits by the GPNs- were the GPN visits standardized to some degree- through the EMR templates mentioned? How did you mitigate differences in the skill level of each of the GPNs in facilitating these conversations with patients? How long were the visits with the GPN and what was the actual interface with the GPs after the GPNs visit? There is mention that the patients were referred back to the GPs to sign forms, but I would like to know the GP perspective as to whether they found the discussions and conclusions re ACP to be medically appropriate for the specific medical context at hand for each patient. In general terms- was this acceptable to the GPs and the GPNs as well, (fully acknowledging that it was the patients who were the focus of your study). I feel that to ensure that this model was clinically useful and relevant to the GP practice, that the perceived appropriateness of these discussions with GPNs by the GPs would be important information to understand, in addition to the patient perspectives (ie: did not having enough medical information about the patient cause an ACP conversation to veer off tangentially to decisions that were not medically feasible or possible?)

8) How did you decide on the use of GPNs- did you consider having GPs involved explicitly too in your training and model suggested in your study?

8) IN your analysis of the transcripts, how did you determine the subset of interviews that JT coded- how can you be sure that this was representative of the other ones not coded by JT given that this was the main secondary comparison of the coding tree that was developed by the primary coder HM? How was saturation achieved and ensured? Were you able to triangulate this analysis with any other sources? I would like some more details to ensure the reader can be confident in the rigour of your analysis methods.

Best wishes- thank you.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

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?
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Yes

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Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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