Reviewer’s report

Title: Towards appropriate information provision for and decision-making with patients with limited health literacy in hospital-based palliative care in Western countries: a scoping review into available communication strategies and tools for healthcare providers

Version: 0 Date: 30 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer’s report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses a testable research question(s) (brief or other article types: is there a clear objective)?

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

Yes - the approach is appropriate

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

Yes - experiments and analyses were performed appropriately

Statistics - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?

N/A - there are no statistics in this study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

Yes - the author's interpretation is reasonable

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Is the current version of this work technically sound? If not, can revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
Yes - current version is technically sound

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Objective - to find strategies or tools that are most effective in supporting patients with limited health literacy in palliative care.

An important question to ask. I have not seen this question asked before. As the author(s) point out - important to meet the wishes and needs of the patient to achieve desired person-centred palliative care and shared decision-making. Also how this is compounded by the high demands posed on professionals regarding appropriate and effective communication.

Method - as this is an area little written about / researched, a scoping review was conducted and this is defined in the context of this difficult research question. A considerable number of data bases were searched together with the 'grey literature' and contacting experts in the field. Database publications were independently reviewed by two authors and disagreements were resolved by discussion. Keywords 'tools' and 'strategies' were not defined beforehand and post-hoc these was added to the inclusion criteria.

Results - of 218 non-duplicate publications identified from the databases, after selection, one publication remained for inclusion. In the grey literature of 626 publications, four publications were included and of the national experts who reported a total of 118 studies, no study was included.

Discussion - the possible deductions that can be made from the results are given together with the limitations and the fact that this is an area that requires further research. ie Future research should focus on which strategies or tools are (most) effective in supporting patients with limited health literacy in palliative care.

The figure, table and appendix 1 with search strategy are very helpful to the reader and appendix 2 in relation to the grey literature.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

None required other than proof reading the manuscript

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

None required that I could find

Note: This reviewer report can be downloaded - see attached pdf file.
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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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