Author’s response to reviews

Title: Supporting carers: health care professionals in need of system improvements and education - a qualitative study

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Author’s response to reviews:

We thank you for your valuable comments that have now been integrated in the revised manuscript enclosed: “Supporting family carers: health care providers in need of system improvements and education - a qualitative focus group study”. We have done all changes requested, and are grateful for the help given to improve the quality of the article.

Editor’s comments:

1) The manuscript is quite long. Please work to condense the word count of the results section somewhat, without losing key findings. There is a sense that the categories that represent how HCPs support carers, have been given much more detailed structure than the categories which describe what hampered HCP support. The authors should attempt to condense somewhat the first half of the results so that the results section is a little more balanced in the word count between the two main components of the results section.

2) Shorten where necessary, the length of many of the headings/subheadings (in the results section) which are in their current from, unnecessarily long and cumbersome.

3) It is not fully clear to the reader what system the authors are attempting to use when they are signaling the source for each quotation in the findings section. Please refer to other qualitative articles recently published in BMC Palliative Care for guidance.
4) The current manuscript sites nearly 80 references. This is far too excessive for an original research article. Again, please refer to other qualitative articles recently published in BMC Palliative Care for guidance.

5) Please ensure that all references at the end of the revised manuscript follow the referencing style for BMC Palliative Care. There are a number of inconsistencies in the current version.

Revisions made as requested:

1) The length of the first main section of the results section has been considerably shortened to obtain a better balance in the word count between the two sections.

2) The length of the headings/subheadings in the results section have been shortened as requested, and are hence more readable.

3) We have consulted a number of qualitative articles in BMC Palliative Care, and have followed a system used in several articles. The only reference for each quotation is now the title of the informant, e.g. “nurse”.

4) We have consulted other articles in BMC Palliative Care. The number of references have been reduced from 75 to 48, which should be within the limits practiced in some of the articles published.

5) A number of references have been adjusted to fit the referencing style for BMC Palliative Care.

We are ready to undertake additional improvements if requested.