Reviewer’s report

Title: Can a single question about family members' sense of security during palliative care predict their well-being during bereavement? A longitudinal study during ongoing care and one year after the patient's death

Version: 0 Date: 19 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Research Square

Reviewer's report:

"STATISTICAL REVIEWER ASSESSMENT:

Is the study design appropriate for the research question (considering whether the analyzed population accurately reflects the design and whether you see any problems with control/comparison groups, e.g., likely confounders)?

No - there are minor issues

Are methodologies adequate and well implemented (considering whether assumptions are addressed and whether analyses are robust)?

No - there are minor issues

Are the analyses adequately communicated (considering whether reporting details are adequate and whether figures and tables are well labeled and described)?

No - there are minor issues

Does the interpretation accurately reflect the analyses without overstatement (considering whether limitations/bias are acknowledged and whether accurate descriptors, e.g., 'significant', are used)?

Yes - interpretation accurately reflects analyses, limitations/bias are acknowledged, accurate descriptors are used
Could an appropriately REVISED version of this work represent a statistically sound contribution?

Probably - with minor revisions

STATISTICAL REVIEWER COMMENTS:

Generally I think the authors have approached the analyses in an appropriate manner. The decisions they have made about the analyses are sensible and they appear to have conducted and reported the analyses appropriately.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

The main concern I have with the manuscript is that some of the psychological concepts being addressed are being assessed via single-item measures. As psychological phenomena are usually not directly measurable then multiple item scales are used to approximate a measure of the concept. Multiple items are used partly to manage the effect of measurement error. Therefore, the authors need to consider why they do not believe that measurement error has played a role in the responses to their questionnaire.

A generalised estimating model seems very appropriate, but it would be useful if the authors explicitly justified their choice of this approach, as it will likely be unfamiliar to many readers.

The reporting of the statistics relies heavily on the Wald statistic. Again, I think this will be unfamiliar to many readers, although it is used appropriately. I suggest that the authors perhaps provide some brief and simple guide to readers about how to interpret the Wald values."

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

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No
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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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