Reviewer’s report

Title: An instrument to assess the education needs of nursing assistants within a palliative approach in residential aged care facilities

Version: 1 Date: 16 May 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

"PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (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 sufficient 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?

Yes - appropriate statistical analyses have been used in the study

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

No - there are minor issues
OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?

Probably - with minor revisions

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: 4 reviewers have made comments and these appear to have been addressed in considerable detail both in a table at the start and in the manuscript

These have been addressed appropriately and where not, an appropriate reason has been provided

All these changes should ideally be reflected in the title so it could more accurately read;

"An instrument to assess the education needs of nursing assistants within a palliative approach in residential aged care facilities, in Australia"

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

One area I struggled with was response rates -

For the Nursing assistants (n=353) across 17 sites, how many nursing assistants were contacted originally? I assume a greater number were contacted to gain representation from 17 sites. I ask as it is written; "Twenty facilities were deemed a sufficient sample for recruitment purposes", but there were 17 and "A minimum sample of 300 participants was sought based on statistical advice", and there are 353, which is obviously fine. Similarly, did the participants complete all of the 16 page booklet of questionnaires? For example, it is stated that "Nursing assistants (n=353) across 17 sites completed the demographic questions". What about all the other questions? And if they didn't complete them all, does this impact on the interpretation of the results? On Page 23, does the following address these questions I have been asking; "The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test and the Barlett's test of sphericity were used to verify the sample's adequacy for the analysis"?

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

It would useful to have a summary table of what the educational needs of the nursing assistants are in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes within a 'palliative approach.' There should be a summary of this in the abstract - currently it reads; "This study provides preliminary evidence for the validity and reliability of three new questionnaires that demonstrate sensitivity for nursing
assistants' level of education and required knowledge, skills and attitudes in providing a palliative approach."

Why are there 2 sets of references?

Should the questionnaires used appear in the Appendices? I think they probably should.

Apologies for asking further questions, but this will further strengthen this important paper which should them be ready for publication.

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.

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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