Reviewer’s report

Title: “I go into crisis when ...”: Ethics of care and moral dilemmas in Palliative care

Version: 1 Date: 17 Jul 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?
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 - 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?
Yes - current version is technically sound

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: My impression is that the authors have systematically and adequately addressed the reviewers' comments. They have significantly improved the Background section and have clarified the aims/objectives of the project, ensuring they are consistent throughout the paper. There were a few areas that I felt needed further clarification which I outline below.
REQUESTED REVISIONS:
The first sentence of the data collection section is unclear to me (how were the thematic areas derived?). Given the addition of the new material, is it necessary?

The strengths and limitations section suggest that the data were analysed and discussed by a multidisciplinary team of researchers but the data collection section only introduces the PI. A few more details about the research team might be warranted.

Four of the themes are presented as ""morality is ..."". Why isn't this format used for the 4th theme? (Morality is giving importance to dialogue and communication"")

The results section ends with ""Finally, some professionals report that they have never been faced with a moral dilemma"". It was unclear why the final statement needed to be included. If there was a reason, I think it requires some further discussion. (Unless 99% of respondents reported that they never faced a moral dilemma, and then this section of the paper would likely be very different.)

The jump from the results of this paper to the conclusion ""we strongly believe in providing HPs with multi-level ethical training"" in the conclusions may need additional discussion. Why do the reported results lead to this conclusion on the part of the authors?

The authors state as one of the limitations ""we did not collect information on the educational background of the participants"". How important is this given they were all HPs? To me, this isn't an issue. Possibly a larger issue is the respondents' religious background given the earlier discussion of the importance of Christian ethics, but this is likely beyond the scope of this paper.

The quotes are identified as either stemming from a Nurse or Physician (I'm assuming that's what N and P stand for). Is there some rationale for dividing the comments by profession (rather than by age or ward)?"

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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