Reviewer’s report

Title: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials of palliative care for pain among Chinese adults with cancer

Version: 0 Date: 16 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Shao-Yi Cheng

Reviewer's report:

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It is a well-written article of systematic review and meta-analysis RCT studies conducted in China on the effect of palliative care to cancer pain control. Nevertheless, I have several questions need to be addressed by the author:

Background:

The data were extracted from four most common searching engines in China. It seems to me all the data were all written in Chinese. The quality of the study were not internationally acclaimed. Please explain.

Methods:

1. As for non-pharmacological way to treat cancer pain, did the author search 'acupuncture'? It is a common way to relieve pain for any causes including cancer pain for the Chinese.

2. A bio-statistician should be invited to review the method section as well.
Results

1. "In order to expand searches, we also searched the international databases of PubMed 17 (n=95), SCIE (n=21) and an internet search, but there were no studies that met our inclusion criteria". It is hard to imagine that a RCT study could be published on domestic journals only but not on international journals.

2. "Dosage and type of analgesic were reported in detail in only one study [25]. " Again, this statement makes me worry very much about the quality of the meta-analysis.

3. Publication bias is large.

Discussion

Despite all the limitations, a good attempt to conclude palliative care improves cancer pain.

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

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I recommend additional statistical review

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