Reviewer’s report

**Title:** What are essential elements of high-quality palliative care at home? An interview study among patients and relatives faced with advanced cancer

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 06 Jul 2019

**Reviewer:** Yvonne Engels

**Reviewer's report:**

This is a well-written, interesting paper in which patients and relatives were interviewed about their palliative care experiences in primary care.

I have the following questions and suggestions:

Title: 'and their families' suggests that Always dyads of patient-family were interviewed, which is not the case.

Background:

lines 39-40: Accordingly...... palliative care. Indeed, these are indicators for palliative care, but it does not say anything about the quality of the palliative care provided at home. For instance, the fact that in the Netherlands so many patients who die at home receive palliative sedation implies that they had refractory symptoms, which is not in line with home death is high quality. Of course this discussion does not need to be added to the introduction, but just mentioning these indicators seems not ideal to me.

Line 52: They have opportunities .....: add that this is mainly consultation by Phone.

Page 6 lines 68-69: the palliative patients received.... I don't understand the sentence. Did you forget a word?

Line 71: patients' illness instead of patient's illness (earlier in the sentence you also use plural)

Methods:

You used the suprise question as inclusion criterion. I have the impression that most data concerns the terminal phase (many aspects concern home visits of nurses and doctors). Can you add something about the stage and condition of the patients about whom the participants shared the experiences?

I miss information about data saturation. If you did not have data saturation, that is also needed to be mentioned.
I miss information about the interrelatedness of themes which you describe in the results section and should be mentioned here. How did you do this?

Results:

Page 11, theme 3. Before you mention the three categories of this theme, you already start with a quote and some information. Does this first paragraph not belong to one of these three categories?

Page 12: Taking the patient and THEIR relative. Should be his or her (singular)

Page 12 line 218: one 'can' should be deleted (can subsequently can)

Page 15 line 303: as a partners should be as a partner.

Medical record: I would say individual care plan.

Page 16 line 329. Costs instead of cost

Discussion:

Start with including the research question in the first lines.

page 18 line 396: interviewees had (instead of have)

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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