Reviewer’s report

Title: Screening with the double surprise question to predict deterioration and death: an explorative study

Version: 0 Date: 05 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Jun Hamano

Reviewer's report:

This prospective cohort study with retrospective medical record review aimed to clarify the accuracy of this double surprise question (DSQ) in a general practice. This research question is important for developing the primary palliative care.

The result seems to have good implication, though there might be the limitation in terms of methodology.

1. Although, authors compared Group 1, Group2a and Group 2b, it is needed to include the group which is SQ1 yes + SQ2 yes, and SQ1 yes + SQ2 no, if author want to clarify the usability of DSQ. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude the DSQ discriminates between patients with different life expectancies and care consumptions, and also show that SQ2 complements SQ1. The reason why I think this way is that author described as "we added a second question (SQ2) 23 to SQ1: 'Would I be surprised if this patient is still alive after 12 months?'".

2. In line 196 to 197, author described "by asking both questions, a division into three groups was 197 made with largely different death rates". But, as I mentioned above they did not assess the both question for all participant. It might be better to clarify the definition of DSQ, or change the definition of DSQ in their article. (eg. DSQ is adding SQ2 to SQ1 positive patient)

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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