Author’s response to reviews

Title: Role of nurses in medication management at the end of life: a qualitative interview study

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Version: 2 Date: 23 Apr 2020

Author’s response to reviews:

Technical Comments:

Editor Comments:

Please can you attend to the following minor points before we make a final decision on your manuscript:

Reply: Thank you for the feedback.

Please be consistent with your use of the terms palliative care and end of life care as these are used as synonyms throughout, however they have different meanings in many countries.

Reply: Indeed, there is a difference in palliative care and end-of-life care, depending also on the country and language. We tried to be as consistent as possible. In the background section we introduce the broader frame of medication management in palliative care, which is typically considered to involve the last year of life. In our study we focused on the last 3 months, a period we refer to as the end of life.
We specified this in our methods section (page 4, line 22) and in the limitations (page 16, line 22). We thought it would not be correct to substitute palliative care with end-of-life care in the introduction and discussion, as the literature we cite there speaks about ‘palliative care’.

p3, line 8 - the phrase "at a certain phase of life" is rather ambiguous so can you be a little more specific. If you are specifically referring to the end of life it is fine to state that.

Reply: We changed this into ‘end of life’.

p3 - the sentence "several studies indicate....." still needs review. I don't think it is correct to make a blanket statement like this as I don't think it is fair to say that ALL physicians rarely review medication. Please can you amend this sentence to make it clear which physicians you are referring to here, perhaps by more clearly citing data from the reference source.

Reply: We adjusted this sentence (p3, lines 16-18).

p3 - the final sentence (line 27-29) is a little unclear with respect to traditional norms, what is meant by this? Perhaps clarify by stating something like 'the nature of the relationship between physician and nurse and the hierarchies in place may hinder nurse from actively discussing their suggestions regarding medication' (if this is a correct interpretation of your meaning?)

Reply: Thank you for the correct formulation, we adopted the proposal (p3, line 26-28).

p4, line 13 - older people is a preferred term to elderly

Reply: We adapted this (p4, line 8).

Include a brief statement somewhere (intro or possibly methods) on the legal position of nurses regarding medication management in palliative care, describing under what (if any) circumstances nurses are allowed to prescribe or de-prescribe. This is important context and the situation in the Netherlands may be different from elsewhere.

Reply: We included a statement on the legal position of the nurses in the methods section (p5, lines 12-15).

We operate a policy of open peer review for this journal, which means that you will be able to see the names of the reviewers who provided the reports via the online peer review system. We encourage you to also view the reports there, via the action links on the left-hand side of the page, to see the names of the reviewers.

Reviewer reports:
Reviewer 1: I commend the authors on their attention to the feedback provided and recommend the paper be published. I look forward to seeing it in print.

Reviewer 2: The authors have satisfactorily addressed the reviewers' comments and the manuscript is now acceptable for publication in my opinion.