Reviewer’s report

Title: Current status of integrating oncology and palliative care in Japan: A nationwide survey

Version: 0 Date: 18 Nov 2019

Reviewer: David Hui

Reviewer's report:

The investigators conducted a cross sectional survey to examine the state of palliative care at government designated and non-designated cancer hospitals in Japan. The response rate was 269/399 (67%) for designated hospitals and 150/478 (31%) for non-designated hospitals. Matching was conducted based on inpatient beds and region.

This study was well design and well written. It represents an admirable amount of work and provides important information on the state of palliative care in Japan. The following comments may help readers to better appreciate this study:

1. Abstract. The statement "Further investigation is warranted whether those indicators effectively work in real clinical situations." was not supported by the data presented in the abstract. Instead, consider highlighting major research/educational gaps that need to be addressed.
2. Methods. Please clarify if a primary outcome was defined for this survey.
3. Methods. This survey was sent to hospital executives. Please comment if they were expected to provide accurate details on palliative care program in their hospitals.
4. Methods. Only a selected number of major/minor indicators were included in the survey (e.g. early referral [>6 months before death in the outpatient setting] was not included). The investigators may want to include their rationale for this selection.
5. Results (p.11) "A total of 70% executive physicians in both types of hospitals did not regard their primary PC as good enough" How was primary PC defined in this survey?
6. Discussion. Consider listing multiple testing as a limitation.
7. Table 2. "Presence of interdisciplinary palliative care team" How was this defined?
8. Table 3. "Oncology fellows have routine rotation in palliative care" - >50% of respondents reported "no palliative care team" - this seems inconsistent with findings of Table 2. The same applies to next question. The wording "Not available" in this table should also be clarified - was it missing data or the program was not available.

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.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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