Reviewer’s report

Title: Shared decision making with oncologists and palliative care specialists effectively increases the documentation of the preferences for do not resuscitate and artificial nutrition and hydration in patients with advanced cancer: a model testing study

Version: 0 Date: 15 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Ida Korfage

Reviewer's report:

Review bmc care
15 september 2019

The authors describe how involving oncologists and palliative care specialists in shared decision making with patients with advanced cancer resulted in increased documentation on DNR preferences. I think structuring this involvement of both type of clinicians can indeed be very supportive for patients who may have to make difficult decisions about prolonging treatment or opting for comfort care.

My questions and suggestions are the following:

ACP is a process, as the authors indicate too. So, completion of ACP of DNR sounds strange. The outcome measures as described suggest a narrow interpretation of ACP, namely documentation of DNR or ANH. So, to which extent was this ACP?

Related to this, ACP has been defined in many ways. I ask the authors to indicate in the first paragraph of the background which definition(s) of ACP they are referring to when they indicated that ACP is essential for patients to honor their autonomy or that the aim of ACP is to preserve dignity at the end of life.

Another remark considers the numbers as reported: they relate to completion rates after option talk and decision talk, but not to numbers after choice talk, i.e. the conversation with oncologist. Without those numbers we cannot evaluate the contribution of both type of clinicians in the SDM process. Also a comparison of documentation for groups of patients who did not participate in the SDM process would be useful.

The study showed that documentation increased. However, we do not know how this impacted what happened in practice: were preferences as documented followed? Did actual situations occur in which one had to decide about resuscitation?
Methods: inclusion criteria included 'were recommended by oncologists that the integration of palliative care was optimal'. I am not sure what this means?

Statistical analysis relate to two-sample tests. Which two samples are these? Those with DNR documentation versus those without?

Results: 255 patients met the eligibility criteria and participated. Not clear if any patients refused?

I suggest to refer to patients with advanced cancer than advanced cancer patients.

Also suggest to have language checked.

Numbers of decimals for e.g. percentages need to be reduced.

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.

Unable to assess

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal