Reviewer's report

Title: Ethical deliberations about involuntary treatment: interviews with Swedish psychiatrists.

Version: 4 Date: 22 April 2015

Reviewer: Geir Lorem

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The authors clearly state their research question and thus places the study within a field of limited research, but with increasing international interest. The study offers important insights into key elements of the clinical reasoning concerning involuntary treatment. The findings are well presented and with many relevant insights and concerns voiced by the participants. The findings and discussion focus on how the participants try to balance the use of coercion to avoid harm (i.e. suicide), respect for autonomy, legalization, and institutional factors.

The discussion thus contributes to explaining not only how complex the decision-making processes might be. For example the finding “Inadequate resources” and their remark “It is noteworthy that several respondents argued that inadequate healthcare organization and care environment could make decisions about involuntary treatment necessary.” It aims to clarify and explain – not only how complex the question of involuntary treatment is – but they also uphold that some concerns most likely should be solved by other means than involuntary treatment. It is just one example, in total, the study have clear, practical/clinical significance, and should be of interest for clinicians, patients/consumers, family members – but also health policy makers and administrators.

The methods section is well written. The procedures and limitation are clearly described. The data appears to be sound. The authors clearly state the strength and limitation of their interpretations – the main weakness being the small number of participants. Discussion and conclusion summarize the findings and, in particular, the section on autonomy offer interesting insight. Good balance between the voices of the participants and researchers interpretation. It is easy to follow the line of thought.

Thank you for a well written and important study.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.