Reviewer’s report

Title: "Guarding their Practice": A Descriptive Study of Canadian Nursing Policies and Education related to Medical Cannabis

Version: 0 Date: 30 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Dickens - Geoffrey L.

Reviewer's report:

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An interesting and generally well written paper. Might have been strengthened by some evidence of greater alacrity in maximising response rate across all phases. It was a bit of an anticlimax to learn that the situation (re lack of policies) has moved on since the study. Are you therefore really adding new information?

Some other points:
Abstract: line 4/5 'pivotal role'. It sounds from your paper that this is not actually inevitable without some changes to regulations etc. Could this be worded more hesitantly e.g. NPs have the potential to play a pivotal role or similar.

Your distinction is between Medical and Non-medical. For non-Canadians it is unclear whether there are any differences in terms of the supplier, form, mode of delivery etc.

p.4 line 22-23 Stigma. Ok, but how/why has this manifested? You mean providers are stigmatised by providing?

Study aims are a little vague - what are the specific objectives? You are exploring the perspectives of people not 'regulatory bodies'. What is it you aimed to explore specifically?

Methods. Some distinguish between sequential and parallel mixed methods designs to distinguish those which occur in phases like yours and those conducted simultaneously.

The study is described as 'mixed methods' but what are those methods? Policy/document review; Semi-structured interviews; online survey. The description of these elements is very sparse e.g., qualitative thematic analysis: any particular model or steps followed? For all elements, what was the sampling
frame? Inclusion/exclusion criteria? Consent process? Ethical approval?

Results
PC Interveiws - reps of 7/12 regulatory bodies, but how did this break down in terms of whether they were employess of a body that addressed cannabis in policy?

You say who was interviewed but not the reasons why some bodies etc were not represented. Refusal? Failed to respond?

The information about nurses' fitness to practice seems a bit tangential to the main thrust of the study.

Survey: any reminders sent or other strategies utilised to boost completion rate?

p.14 line 15 'was some inconsistencies' should be 'were some’?

Line 46: 'Even where nurses were allowed to provide care related to medical cannabis, they were 19 required to first consult with available institutional policies.' Is this really unusual?

It is a bit of a balloon pop moment to learn that policies have largely been updated since this study was conducted. This means that the basis of the study has moved on, and the information provided by participants may no longer be relevant. I think the authors should consider whether the study really does offer useful information given these changes.

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

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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

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