Reviewer’s report

Title: The Rocks and Hard Places of MAiD: A qualitative study of nursing practice in the context of legislated assisted death

Version: 0 Date: 12 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Harvey Max Chochinov

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this extremely well written, well presented, comprehensive scholarly paper. It provides important empirical insights that will inform practice and policy regarding MAiD in Canada.

My recommendations are few and relatively minor for the authors consideration.

Page 5. Is it possible to update the 2017 data regarding the number of MAiD related deaths (clinician versus self administered) that have occurred.

Page 8. It is not clear what the sampling frame was for this study. Were all provinces invited to take part; how were sites chosen; where was advertising done (hospitals, personal care homes, palliative care facilities, cancer centres, etc.)? I am assuming that participants come from major urban centres. How does this impact the findings, given the paucity of palliative care in rural and remote regions of Canada?

Page 9. Readers may not understand how the provisions within the Bill differ for Registered Nurses versus Nurse Practitioners.

Page 11. The sentence reading 'At one end of the spectrum, nurses were allowed to take a day off without pay if MAiD was occurring on their unit' should clarify that this pertains to 'nurses uncomfortable with MAiD'.

Page 12. The authors state that clinicians are required to offer palliative care to clients considering MAiD. The legislation reads that they need to be informed of the means that are available to relieve their suffering including palliative care. Informing them that palliative care is an option does not equate, as the authors point out several times in this paper, that palliative care will be available.

Page 20. It certainly is concerning that MAiD referrals may be initiated as a result of insufficient time to explore an expressed wish for hastened death. The ability to explore the latter is a core competency in palliative care i.e. MAiD does not change the obligation to do a comprehensive clinical assessment for patients indicating a wish to die.

Page 21. Indicate (in brackets) what a Form C is.

Page 26. The difficulties and sensitivities around reporting are addressed in the discussion; what is not acknowledge is that their needs to be sufficient information collected to ensure that healthcare providers are acting in accordance with the law and that future practices and policies can be data informed.
Table 1. The Spiritual or Religious Affiliation data needs to be clarified. 11 people are neither religious or spiritual; 5 people are spiritual but not religious; which means the remainder identify as religious.

In summary, an excellent paper. Thank you for the opportunity to review it.

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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