Reviewer’s report

Title: Physicians' Knowledge and Practice on Death Certification in the North West Bank, Palestine: Across sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 17 Oct 2016

Reviewer: Randah Ribhi Hamadeh

Reviewer's report:

General Comments:

* The manuscript addresses an important topic, which has health policy implications but the authors do not emphasize this issue enough.

* The punctuation and grammar require revision.

* Use of capital letters need to be reviewed.

* Decimal places are not consistent throughout the manuscript.

* Spacing between lines is not the same throughout manuscript.

Abstract:

* Page 2, lines 45-46: "A cross-sectional study was conducted to achieve the study Objectives", delete.

* Page 3: line 4: "deficient enough", rephrase.

Introduction:

* Page 3, line 16: delete "medical" as physicians are medical.


* Page 3,line 48: "System"?

* Page 3,line 52: "significantly", there should be a word after it, which is missing.

* Page 3-4,lines 46-40,4: Paragraph is not clear and requires revision.
* Need a description of the number of hospitals and physicians in Palestine and the North East Bank.

Aim of the Study:
* It should be at the end of the introduction and not a separate heading.
* Under this heading, the authors put the aim and the objective together.

Methodology:
* How was the sampling frame attained?
* What is the total of eligible physicians?
* Page 4, line 26: 25% of what?
* Page 4, line 33: Where the 20 physicians excluded from the study?
* Page 4, lines 45-52: Already described in the introduction. No need to repeat but mention "described above".
* Page 5, line 7: No need to abbreviate "IRB" as it is used once in the text.
* Approval of hospital administrators is not mentioned.

Results:
* Page 5, lines 14-16: This is part of methodology, not results. Also, how were they approached?
* Table 1: Review title. No need for "practicing".
* Table 1: Years Since Graduation should be 1,2-5, 6-10, >11. Also did you exclude those <1 year or you did not have any. If you excluded, it should be mentioned in methods.
* Table 1: In the footnote, it is mentioned that you had GPs while in text it is mentioned that you included specialists. Further, do you have GPs in hospitals?
* Table 1: In the footnote, no need to mention specialties if they are many. It would be others only but if few mention all instead of two.
Page 6, line 27, 'figure 6'. We start with "figure 1".

Page 6, lines 27-28, why the quotations?

Table 2; Better presented as figure.

Table 3: Revise title.

Table 3; the percentages were written in an inconsistent manner. Rounding was done at times, one decimal or no decimal place.

Discussion:

It requires more interpretation of results.

Page 8, line 37: It is mentioned that 56.9% graduated <5 years so it might include less than a year?

Page 8, lines 40-41: "This maybe…hospitals". It is not a good explanation.

Page 8, line 48: No need to abbreviate "MOH".

Page 8, line 51: What organizations are the "other related"?

Page 9, line 39: Primary care physicians are not involved in death certification. Also one should not include "under publication" results.

Conclusion:

Page 10, lines 10-19, Paragraph 1: It is not needed, needs to be deleted.

Policy implications should be stressed; role of medical schools curricula and residency programs should be highlighted.

List of Abbreviations: Not needed.

References:

The references are not written in a consistent pattern. In addition, the authors use capital letters at times and in others, they do not.
Tables and figures:

* They are written twice, within the text and after.

**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.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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