Reviewer’s report

Title: Need for Information, Honesty and Respect: Patient Perspectives on Health Care Professionals Communication about Cancer and Fertility

Version: 0 Date: 01 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Haryana Dhillon

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this article reporting the qualitative findings from interviews with participants in a larger survey study. The authors have clearly articulated their aims and research questions. The methods are appropriate and well described demonstrating a high level of rigour in the qualitative analysis.

Results of this study confirm and extend previous findings, and are indicative of a high level of distress amongst some patients related to their experience of (or lack of information about) fertility preservation prior to commencing their anti-cancer treatment(s). Interestingly, the authors indicate a higher level of health literacy regarding reproductive outcomes in patients who were informed about fertility issues prior to treatment. I did wonder if health literacy was measured in anyway or if these comments reflect only the participants ability to demonstrate greater knowledge about fertility issues?

Given that these data complement a larger survey study, I would have liked to see a greater integration of the qualitative findings with those of the quantitative survey results. At the present time, the results of both components of the study have been treated independently. Could the authors please comment on the rationale for this decision and whether there is an opportunity to use the complete datasets to triangulate results toward stronger recommendations regarding improvement in service provision for these participants.

The discussion places these findings in the context of the broader literature regarding cancer and fertility. While there is a suggestion that a group of health care professionals knowledgeable in fertility preservation be included in the cancer MDT, the comment lacks any discussion of the feasibility of this suggestion. Could the authors please comment more pragmatic or alternative approaches to improving services for, or at least discussion of, fertility preservation options and cancer treatment implications with patients in a more timely way. For example, could this be achieved by improved education and training for oncology staff in how to have these discussions and what the options are, as well as awareness of fertility concerns and the impact of making assumptions about reproductive preferences of their patients?
I noted two points for correction:

Page 13 line 30 fertility preservations - remove s

Page 21, line 17 - cancer type for participant is undefined.

Overall, this is an excellent paper.

**Level of interest**

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

**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 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