Reviewer’s report

Title: Towards evidence-based palliative care in nursing homes in Sweden: a qualitative study informed by the organizational readiness to change theory

Version: 0 Date: 27 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Sandra Dunn

Reviewer's report:

Implementation Science Reviewer's Critique

Title: Towards evidence-based palliative care in nursing homes in Sweden: a qualitative study informed by the organizational readiness to change theory.

Reviewer's Comments:

This manuscript reports the results of a qualitative study that explores organizational readiness to implement palliative care based on evidence-based guidelines in nursing homes in Sweden. The aim was to identify barriers and facilitators to implementing evidence-based palliative care in nursing homes. Interviews were carried out with 20 managers from 20 nursing homes in two municipalities who had participated along with staff members in seminars aimed at conveying knowledge and skills of relevance for providing evidence-based palliative care. Two managers responsible for all elderly care in each municipality were also interviewed. The questions were informed by the theory of Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC). ORC was also used as a framework to analyze the data by means of categorizing barriers and facilitators for implementing evidence-based palliative care. Analysis of the data yielded 10 factors (i.e. sub-categories) acting as facilitators and/or barriers. Four factors constituted barriers: the staff’s beliefs in their capabilities to face dying residents, their attitudes to changes at work as well as the resources and time required. Five factors functioned as either facilitators or barriers because there was considerable variation with regard to the staff’s competence and confidence, motivation and attitudes to work in general, as well as the managers' plans and decisional latitude concerning efforts to develop evidence-based palliative care. Leadership was a facilitator to implementing evidence-based palliative care. Overall the findings indicated that there are considerable individual- and organizational-level challenges to achieving evidence based palliative care in this setting.
Overall Impression:

This manuscript addresses an important issue in health care and is well written. Based on qualitative analysis of interview data, the authors identified several important barriers and facilitators to implementing evidence-based palliative care in nursing homes in Sweden.

My biggest concerns are related to lack of completeness and transparency in reporting which make it difficult to have confidence in the findings presented. Based on the COREQ (Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research) guidelines there are substantial gaps in the information provided. To enhance the quality of this manuscript, more detail is required with respect to the following:

Characteristics of the research team

- Credentials, occupation during the study, experience and training, relationships with the participants, interviewer biases and assumptions etc.

Study design

- Sample - how participants were selected, approached, recruited, and what about non-participants
- Setting - where was data collected
- Data collection - duration of interviews, establishment of an audit trail, confirmation of data saturation, any participant checking of the transcripts

Data analysis

- Software - clarification of software and processes used to manage the data
- Member checking or validation of the findings
- Reporting - need for elaboration on implications for practice, education and future research

This was a relevant study and I feel the paper warrants a place in the peer-reviewed literature. I would support it being reconsidered for publication in Implementation Science once the major revisions highlighted above have been addressed to enhance the content, validate the qualitative methodology used to collect and analyze the data, and strengthen the findings presented. If
revised, this paper could be a valuable resource for clinicians, decision makers and researchers interested in practice change as well as those involved in the provision of palliative care in home care settings.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript.

Sandy Dunn RN PhD

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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