Reviewer’s report

Title: Patient and family-initiated escalation of care: A qualitative systematic review protocol

Version: 0 Date: 24 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Eric Apaydin

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting and thorough protocol for a systematic review of patients' and families' perceptions of care deterioration and subsequent patient-/family-initiated escalation of care. Overall, this manuscript is very well written and provides a very complete background of the topic and relevant related research.

I have only a few suggested edits:

(1) Methods/Data synthesis: Authors state that they will thematically code data to develop relevant themes. However, this is confusing, as authors seem to be proposing to thematically code study-level themes. That is, this qualitative systematic review will involve qualitatively synthesizing study-level qualitative themes. Please clarify this, as the existing text implies that authors will be coding respondent-level data, which is not possible to do using existing published articles.

(2) Methods/Data synthesis: Authors state that they will summarize results narratively, but later, in the "Appraisal of certainty of review findings" section, authors state that they will use a "Summary of findings"-like table to summarize review themes. Please provide a table shell of this table in the Supplementary Materials so that the reader has a better understanding of how findings will be presented.

Level of interest

Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of limited interest

Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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