Reviewer’s report

Title: A Randomised Phase II Trial to Examine Feasibility of Standardised, Early Palliative (STEP) Care for Patients with Advanced Cancer and their Families [ACTRN12617000534381]: A Research Protocol

Version: 0 Date: 24 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Phillip Good

Reviewer’s report:

Very interesting paper that seeks to address the feasibility of a study examine early referral to palliative care in three specific cancer groups.

Comments/Questions:

Abstract - HGG - needs to be written out in full.

Methods - it wasn’t clear that if the patient/doctor didn’t want audio recording of consultations whether they could still be included in study - ie. was audio recordings compulsory part of study?

Data collection - re use of health services - it wasn’t clear whether this would be through state/federal databases or only from patient/carer recall?

Qualitative data collection - it wasn't clear the timing of these focus groups in relation to death? - I note it is in Table, but would be good to have in text.

I thought it was well written, understandable, and describes a methodology to assess feasibility, and on which a larger Phase 3 trial could be based.

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

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Yes - I have no financial interests that may be a competing interest.

I have been a co-investigator on research with the authors - Jennifer Philip and Brian le.

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