

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A

Comment 1: It is a well written, concise article and this is an important subject, except a few minor grammatical corrections, the manuscript may be accepted.

Reply 1: Thank you for your kind review. I revised our manuscript and had it checked by an English editing service.

Reviewer B

Comment 2: The aim of this study was to determine the oral symptoms and how they change in palliative care patients on a longitudinal study. The subject is interesting, current and important for clinical practice, however, but have some lack of information that need to be reviewed.

Reply 2: Thank you for your kind review. We revised our manuscript as follows.

Comment 3: Page3 line 94-97 What were the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the sample? How sample size was calculated?

Reply 2: We added the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the sample. Additionally, we calculated the sample size.

Changes in the text: Page 6 lines 108-112 and Page 7 lines 127-130.

Comment 4: Page 3 line 98-108 How was this analysis done? How many examiners? How was the calibration performed? Was there an intra- and inter-examiner agreement test?

Reply 2: We have added an explanation on how to use the OHAT.

Changes in the text: Page 6 line 113 – Page 7 line 118.

Comment 5: Page 5 line 166-187 The OHAT test is quite subjective. Why was not sialometry performed to quantify the amount of saliva?

Reply 5: Chalmers et al (reference 4 in our manuscript) demonstrated that the OHAT was evaluated and found to be a reliable and valid screening assessment tool for use in residential care facilities, including those with cognitively impaired residents. As you know, sialometry, such as the gum test and Saxon test, was quite difficult to conduct in these patients, and unstimulated whole salivary flow was almost zero. Objective

evaluation was quite difficult, so we only used a subjective method. We have added the limitations in the discussion.

Changes in the text: Page 12 lines 214-216.

Comment 6: Page 5 line 176 A more recent reference has not been included: SilvaARP, BodanziAV, Chrun ES, Lisboa ML, Camargo AR, Munhoz EA Palliative oral care in terminal cancer patients: Integrated review World J Clin Cases 11(13):2966-2980 Published online May 6, 2023. doi:10.12998/wjcc.v11.i13.2966

Reply 6: Thank you for your advice. I added this reference as No.16.

Changes in the text: Page 16 lines 288-289.

Reviewer C

Comment 7: 1. Please provide the patient's and the clinical features in Table 1 and change the Table Oral Health Assessment Tool (OHAT) scores until death as Table 2.

Reply 7: Thank you for your advice. I added Table 1.

Comment 8: 2. The authors disclosed that they used Friedman tests; in authors' opinion, is this the most suitable method for putting a hypothesis to the test?

Reply 8: Since this is an analysis of nonparametric data with three or more corresponding groups, we believe a Friedman test is appropriate.

Comment 9: • The authors provided statistical analysis showed that the PS score decreased significantly in the week of death compared to the values recorded three, two, or one week before death (It is a well-known fact that patients near the end of their life have worse PS scores; therefore, the question is what new findings the authors wanted to add with this research or provide to readers).

Reply 9: We believe that the fact that the PS was consistent with previous reports is an important result that demonstrates the reliability of this study.

Comment 10: 3. The methodology is unclear; what is the primary hypothesis being tested in this research?

Reply 10: The hypothesis of this study has been described.

Changes in the text: Page 6 lines 102-103.

Comment 11: 4. Given the results of the oral health assessment and discuss how well they correlate with the patient and clinical factors used in the study.

Reply 11: We discussed the relationship between the oral environment and systemic

function deterioration.

Changes in the text: Page 9 lines 162-164.

Comment 12: 5. The authors informed that this longitudinal study aimed to determine the oral symptoms experienced by patients receiving palliative care and how these symptoms develop over time. When uniformly examining each patient comparing the first evaluation to the most recent assessment. What other factors could have impacted these patients to become worse?

Reply 12: Unfortunately, we cannot evaluate other factors, thus we cannot evaluate what factors could have influenced our results. We mentioned this in the discussion.

Changes in the text: Page 12 lines 214-216

Comment 13: 6. As the changes in oral health status are the primary purpose of this study, please describe the oral health status concerning the patient and clinical variables. The study does not indicate what impact such factors have on the outcome.

Reply 13: We cannot evaluate other factors; thus we cannot evaluate what factors influenced our results. We mentioned this in the discussion.

Changes in the text: Page 12 lines 214-216.

Comment 14: 7. What outcomes are measured of the research and the independent variables?

Reply 14: In this study, we examined the total OHAT score and changes in each item over time.

Comment 15: 7. Since it is already common knowledge that patients nearing the end of their lives have a poorer prognosis, it would be helpful if the authors could include the patient's characteristics, including age and other relevant features that impact the outcomes.

Reply 15: I have added Table 1 showing the characteristics of the subjects. However, we cannot reveal what factors impacted our results in this study. We mentioned this in the discussion.

Changes in the text: Page 12 lines 214-216.