

## Journal Watch – Bereavement Risk – November 2017

### **Article:**

Development of the Bereavement Risk Inventory and Screening Questionnaire (BRISQ): Item generation and expert panel feedback

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### **Review:**

#### **Strengths:**

- Well-designed study focusing on the first phase of a three-phase project for developing and gathering validity evidence for a self-report bereavement screening tool: item generation using an expert panel (phase 1), cognitive interviews with family members (phase 2) and clinical validation of the tool (phase 3)
- Comprehensive literature review with cohesive categorical framework for identifying risk factors: background risk factors, illness/death-related factors and bereavement-related factors
- Clear description of methods that could readily be replicated
- Appropriate purposeful sample size (n=15) with relatively diverse representation by gender, clinical vs. research experience, American vs. international perspectives
- Inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative findings with clear criteria for consensus (moderate to high relevance rating, minimum 80% agreement) and reasons for changing/eliminating items

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Lack of representation of racial/ethnic diversity and diversity of professional disciplines on panel
- Potential imitation of using an expert panel, in isolation of other published findings
- Item format (questions) does not correspond with suggested responses (Likert)
- Some items (e.g. race, gender, level of education, caregiver stress, lacking a sense of peace, finding comfort in spirituality/religion) were eliminated due to expert opinion rather than psychometric validation

#### **Relevance to Palliative Care:**

Although family caregivers are considered an important component of the unit of care, many palliative care programs do not routinely screen for potential complicated grief or provide bereavement support for family caregivers. The bereavement screening tool described in this study is a relatively brief, self-report measure. With further validity evidence, it offers promise as an effective tool for screening for risk factors for caregivers prior to and after death