Reviewer's report

Title: The Critical Incident Inventory: Characteristics of Incidents which Affect Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics

Version: 2 Date: 11 April 2012

Reviewer: John M Violanti

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This paper sought to determine these specific characteristics by developing an inventory of critical incident characteristics and testing their relationship to protracted recovery from acute stress, and subsequent emotional symptoms (from abstract).

Comments:

This was a novel way to approach exposure to critical incidents by categorizing them by type. Generally past research has only identified the incident itself.

Since the study was retrospective, the responses may have been affected by recall bias as the authors mention. Also, recalling how one felt then and how one feels now about an incident may be based mostly on conjecture on the part of the respondent.

Why study peritraumatic symptoms? More detail is need in the text as to the effect of peritraumatic stress and dissociation during an incident. Also, previous research has suggested that peritrauma is only associated with PTSD in the future only if it was associated with PTSD during the incident.

Do depression and PTSD overlap?

How was the critical incident scale developed? How were items selected?

Why was burnout assessed?

More information on statistical analysis should be included. What analysis method was used?

Any gender differences?

Age differences?

Were covariates adjusted for?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests