Reviewer's report

Title: Undergraduate medical education in emergency medical care: A nationwide survey AT German medical schools.

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Reviewer: Guttorm Brattebø

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This is a quite interesting survey of the undergraduate emergency care curriculum at German medical schools.

However, my first impression is that the paper is quite long, and that the results perhaps are of most interest to colleagues in Germany. The questionnaire which the results are based on must be extensive, and the authors seem to have wished to describe and explain a lot of issues. In the section on purpose of the survey it is stated that the one of the intentions was to “...discover weaknesses in form and content as well as applied assessment and teaching methods,...”.

As far as I see the main portion of the paper is merely a description of the findings, and to a lesser degree a discussion of what is lacking and hence can or must be improved. E.g. is there a case for using (cheap) paramedic instructors instead of (expensive) physicians?

It is reported in the data analysis section that data are analysed, but I see nothing else than merely reporting of proportions. Did the authors find any interesting differences between institutions or regions?

And what about outcome data: Are there differences in pass/fail rates between the different curricula?

It is further concluded that the training provided in German medical schools has “practical orientation”, but is this only based on the fact that there is instruction in ACLS/BCLS? What about training in treating major trauma patients, acutely sick children, or emergency O&G-cases? I would like to know more details on the content and time allocations for each student.

It is stated in the results section on curriculum structure that 49% of the institutions offer “…a longitudinal format with a minimum of two parts...”. How many days/hours?

There is also a description on which training mannequin each institutions use, information which seems to be irrelevant. On the other hand it would have been interesting to know how simulation is used for training the students.

The discussion on OSCE is interesting, but I would like to have a detailed description of an OSCE in emergency medicine.
There are sentences which are not easy to clearly understand the exact meaning of (e.g. sentence 3 on page 9).

When it comes to the figures I don’t think that figure 2 gives much valuable information. Many of the disciplines presented are not specialities in every European country (e.g. traumatology, burn surgery, psychosomatics, toxicology). On the other hand it would be interesting to know how psychiatry is involved. Or perhaps the number of disciplines (as presented in the figure) involved at each institution?

The definitions of the teaching methods (or rather activities) that are presented in figure 3 are lacking. E.g. is “ambulance practice” interesting (what, how and how much?).

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.