Reviewer's report

Title: Experience as a doctor in the developing world: does it benefit the clinical and organisational performance in general practice?

Version: 2 Date: 5 October 2009

Reviewer: stephen gillam

Reviewer's report:

The authors are laudably attempting to research an issue of interest and potential importance: are there clinical and organisational associations with the experience of having worked aboard for general practitioners? They have made various alterations to their original paper in response to the referees’ comments but cannot overcome fundamental methodological flaws. The databases used probably cannot provide the information needed and the data are old. An interview-based study in the first instance would help formulate hypotheses about what associations are expected.

It is unsurprising that doctors who worked in developing countries settings and were required to be clinically autonomous do more surgical procedures. This too may be associated with working in rural group practices and working part time. No particularly convincing explanation is given for the other quality associations and one doubts their true significance.

I indicated previously that I did not think this paper was suitable for publication other than as a letter and therefore wonder why you have returned it to me. There are grounds for publishing on the grounds of originality but I suggest a second less partial referee might provide a more satisfactory response.