Reviewer's report

Title: Identifying competencies required for medication prescribing for general practice residents: a nominal group technique study.

Version: 1
Date: 5 May 2014

Reviewer: Andrew B Hassell

Reviewer's report:

The case for developing and defining specific competencies required to safely prescribe as a GP in France is clear and well made. Whilst the identified competencies do not differ greatly from those published by others in this field, I can see that those described in this paper may be more accessible for general practitioners, their trainees and their educators, in France.

Major compulsory revisions.

My major reservations concern the methodology. The nominal group technique as described is purported to represent the consensus of 31 participants. However, as far as I understand, there was no interaction between the participants in the 4 groups. As a result, some competencies appear not to have been discussed or included in the output of some of the groups. I think this is a potential weakness in the project which should, at least, be explored by the authors. Also, regarding the methodology, the nominal group technique should be referenced and its use justified in greater depth. In addition, I think there should be greater discussion about the membership of the groups. These competencies are only as good as the methodology permits.

Regarding the competencies, were any competencies initially identified by the groups actually removed by the nominal group technique? I would imagine so. A discussion of examples of these would be helpful.

(Also, Table 2 suggests there were 32 participants while the text indicates there were 31. This should be clarified).

I think there should be a clearer final list of competencies - without all the ranking data - as I guess that is what the authors propose should be used in GP training in France.

Minor essential revisions.

Overall the paper reads well although there are a few minor grammatical errors: "More" - line 6 Background - should, I think be "moreover" 
"...reducing general practitioners prescribing..." - line 25 background - should be 
"...reducing general practitioners' prescribing.."

"Thus, we leded..." - third last line in background - should be "we conducted"

"importance to each item" - line 24 Nominal group meetings- should be 
"importance of each item.."
I wonder whether "particular" or "specific" would be a better descriptor than "peculiar" of the challenge of teaching medication prescribing?

**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