Reviewer's report

**Title:** A survey of physicians knowledge regarding awareness of maternal alcohol use and the diagnosis of FAS.

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**Reviewer:** Dr SE Whaley

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

**Advice on publication:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the compulsory revisions

Overall, this paper presents some interesting findings that illustrate the general lack of medical training for FAS prevention and intervention. These findings are well known by those of us who give lectures about FAS to large groups of doctors, but little has been done to document the knowledge gap in the medical field. This paper is a preliminary step to such documentation, but is not yet ready for publication.

Compulsory Revisions:
The paper would benefit strongly from revision, particularly to the presentation of results. The last sentence of the methods, regarding statistical methods, should be the first part of the results. Instead, it would be more clear to say that since this is an exploratory study of physician knowledge, descriptive statistics are used to present the results. The presentation of results is then somewhat awkward. I can't find a reference to Table 1, and then there is no discussion of the TWEAK in either the method or results section. How was this assessed in the survey? Overall, the results section needs reorganization in order to clarify the main results. The results on Table 4 are difficult to interpret... were the participants asked to rate the top 3 only? Confirmed maternal alcohol exposure is part of the diagnosis and should not be counted "against" the doctor if they indicate that as one of the 3 choices. A more thorough presentation of how these numbers were arrived at is critical for accurate interpretation of the results. Table 5 is equally difficult to interpret.

The response rate is a bit low, and it would be helpful to clarify why is wasn't higher. Were efforts made beyond the 2nd fax 2 weeks later? If there is response bias, is there any indication of it being systematic in any way?

The remaining sections would benefit from minor revisions for grammatical errors (agreement, possible typos, etc). While the writing is acceptable, as noted below, there is room for more clarity. Also, a reference is missing from the version I have.
Competing interests:

None declared.