Reviewer's report

Title: Does Family Medicine training in Thailand affect patient satisfaction with primary care doctors?

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Reviewer: Martin Roland

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This is a carefully conducted study comparing responses of relatively large groups of patients having seen three types of doctors in a primary care outpatient clinic in a Thai hospital. The paper is well written and the analyses and results appropriately described.

The conclusion of the paper is that physicians with family medicine training (the doctors from the Faculty of Family Medicine in this case) get higher scores on the patient questionnaire than other types of doctor.

The main flaw in the authors interpretation is that the Faculty doctors who score highly in this study are a very selected group of doctors from an academic primary care department.

The authors (in the last but one paragraph of the discussion) say that the study may not be generalisable to other settings of primary care across Thailand. This is absolutely true and far too much of a throwaway remark. This is a major weakness of the study and although I think the paper could be published it is absolutely essential that this major caveat is introduced into the abstract to avoid readers being mislead.

A correct conclusion would be that in a pilot study carried out in an unusual setting, doctors with family practice training from an academic department of family medicine scored higher than residents and general doctors, but that a study on a more representative population of doctors is needed to see if a conclusion can be generalised.