Reviewer's report

Title: Satellite clinics in academic ophthalmology programs

Version: 2 Date: 19 September 2013

Reviewer: Philip Chen

Reviewer's report:

Comments for the author

General: an interesting topic, well-written paper. Lack of literature on this topic.

Discretionary:

The writing is not succinct, and while it is informative, better use of Tables (see below) might allow for more efficient transmittal of results to the reader.

Compulsory:

While a good general impression of the study findings results from a quick reading, it would be helpful if a format such as Table 2 were to be used for all the questions asked.

Table 3 would be strengthened if numbers were used to define how many programs fit into each box, though obviously the N of programs studied is very small.

Some of the questions that received qualitative answers or in which the answer is taken at face value, could be relatively easily verified through minor investigation via the website of the participating institutions (e.g. specialties found at satellite clinics, number of comprehensive vs subspecialist faculty, rank of faculty, how many faculty are primarily at satellite vs primarily based at main eye center, etc). It would seem this would be a low-intensity way to add some hard numeric facts to this report, and make it more than conversational. Admittedly, many of the results are based on the impressions of those interviewed, and those cannot be verified.

In the current Table 2, are the number used “ballpark” or “off the cuff” estimates from those interviewed, or were they provided on paper in response to the researcher’s query? The answer to this should be highlighted in the manuscript.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.