Reviewer's report

Title: Career influences among final year dental students. A survey of factors influencing the decision to enter private practice immediately after graduation.

Version: 1 Date: 2 January 2014

Reviewer: Jenny Gallagher

Reviewer's report:

1. Competing interests - if the authors are involved in the education of the students surveyed and/or those likely to undertake specialist postgraduate study, it may be considered that the authors have competing interests. The authors may wish to reflect on this point.

2. Abstract- suggest that the authors include more descriptive results to provide a clearer overview of the findings; for example, the proportion interested in private practice, married.

3. Background - last paragraph on page 5, the authors may wish to reflect on whether the five-fold increase is in 'real terms'.

4. Background or Discussion re debt- a little more explanation of the reasons for the level of debt, eg the cost of fees in this dental college and living expenses would be helpful.

5. Discussion of findings - it is important to relate these findings to the Iowa context, rather than just the national context. This is particularly important in relation to career opportunities (there may not be as many specialist opportunities as some other states) and highlight any special features of the Iowa Dental School. It is important to recognise that they only relate to one school and further collaborative research should be undertaken.

6. Conclusion - the conclusion should be rewritten and shortened so that it summarises what the findings of the model 'suggest', and perhaps make any valid recommendations. The authors should avoid going beyond the findings and including discussion points; rather the latter should be moved to the relevant section.