Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of preclinical patient contacts on the "shock of practice": a focus group study.

Version: 1 Date: 23 November 2009

Reviewer: Rhoda K MacKenzie

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review your article.

The English grammar and spelling are immaculate.

In general it reads well but is very long, even for this type of study.

Good title and abstract (except that the abstract, as it stands, does not cover the non-relevant data in the paper)

Methods and data are sound.

The findings are fairly interesting if unsurprising although there is no ground-breaking research here.

You appear to concentrated on the second part of your research question to draw the reader in.

Major compulsory

The results contain a huge of data which do not really relate to the research question or the title. I read 12 pages of results before I reached the part on pre-clinical patient contacts. You either need to change the title AND your research question (which is not the same in the abstract and full text) or you need to remove the rest of the data. This could be published in a separate paper.

Remember those who took part were likely to be the most keen, enthusiastic students - this should be reflected in the paper.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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'