Reviewer's report

Title: Residents' views about family medicine specialty education

Version: 1 Date: 18 November 2009

Reviewer: Amanda Barnard

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1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The authors of this paper have sought the views of Turkey’s family medicine residents in about their training program, the changes they would like to see and the infrastructure needed to further support their training. This is an original contribution to a developing program, and an important perspective.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The survey method is appropriate, and reasonably well described. It is not always clear whether respondents were answering predefined categories (e.g. primary care experience in state or private clinics) or whether these were free text responses. I think the former, but it would be useful to clarify in more detail the nature of the survey. (discretionary revision)

3. Are the data sound?
The data are overall sound, but there are a few points. The first two are minor essential and the third discretionary.

• In the tables, the total number of responses for each question varies, presumably because not all respondents answered each question, but again it would be useful to indicate this.

There are some minor inconsistencies in the data e.g. in the Abstract, the total number of trainees is given as 650, with a response rate of 29.4%, and in the text it is given as 664, with a response rate of 29%

• Although the data gives the breakdown of respondents in academic university centres and stage hospital programs, “University/State Hospital participant ratio was 35.1% (n=67)/64.9% (n=124)” it would be useful to have data on how many of the total residents are training in each setting. We are told “Although, university based academic departments of family medicine are more numerous compared to State Hospitals, still the majority of family medicine residents in Turkey are trained on State Hospital level.” Numbers would be useful, as from this information it would appear that there was a much higher response rate form the universities, which may be an important consideration.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
This is a strong section of the paper, that uses the data in the wider context of development of the family medicine training program. The residents’ desire for training in a primary care setting, and the need for an identifiable family medicine presence in the state teaching hospitals
The concept of affiliation, when discussing educational methods and infrastructure, needs clarification. (minor essential)

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes, in terms of the response rate

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes, but the methods section of the abstract should be changed to reflect the order of the data as presented in the paper i.e. characteristics of the training before the infrastructure (see below)

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes, with some minor essential revisions. as below
The use of the word ‘inquiring/inquired’ both the abstract and methods should be reconsidered e.g. Methods

“In the year 2005, a questionnaire prepared by the Board executive committee, inquiring infrastructure of institutions offering family medicine residency programs as well as, residents’ opinions about characteristics of the education program was distributed to all university family medicine departments (n=27) engaged in postgraduate training and the residency program coordinators of state education and research hospitals (n= 11) by e-mail and by personal contact”. Could perhaps be changed to

In the year 2005, a questionnaire prepared by the Board executive committee, seeking residents’ opinions about characteristics of the education program as well as infrastructure of institutions offering family medicine residency programs was distributed to all university family medicine departments (n=27) engaged in postgraduate training and the residency program coordinators of state education and research hospitals (n= 11) by e-mail and by personal contact.

Other minor essential language revisions include the word “seminaries” ?should be seminars, and “cumulated”,
**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'