Reviewer's report

Title: Mentoring programs for medical students - a review of the PubMed literature 2000 - 2008

Version: 2 Date: 23 December 2009

Reviewer: Masami Tagawa

Reviewer's report:

Revised manuscript overviews mentorship programs. The method of searching papers is adequate and information of each searched paper is useful for readers. Revised manuscript improves and messages become clear, but discussion and conclusion sections need to modify to clarify the finding of this review paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions

p.5 and 6 Goals of the programs. Four different goals are understandable. Authors classified all reported programs into one category. Some mentoring programs seem to have more than one goal or overlapping goal. Classification of programs might be reconsidered.

p. 11 Effects of mentoring programs. Authors mention about effect of mentoring programs at Introduction, section in Results (P.7), the first and second paragraph of Effect of mentoring programs (p.11), and the first sentence of conclusion. At Discussion, authors do not have to repeat the results, and citation of limited but evidenced effects, factors for effective mentoring programs revealed by searched papers, and types of program evaluation are expected. And discussion here has to become base for designing a new program in Europe.

Minor Essential Revisions

p.9. Discussion, first paragraph. The last sentence is the repetition of the results.

p. 9 About USA and Europe.

The sentence ‘However, if well-established mentoring programs exist in other locations, they would presumably be reported in current literature.’ is based on authors’ supposition. My previous point is that authors need the evidence to conclude the geological uneven distribution. I recommend that authors describe the facts that research papers are from USA and little or no reports were searched from other countries by using criteria and data base.

p.10. Number of students and recommendation of group mentoring. Number of medical student in USA medical school, number of students at reported effective group mentoring programs, and student-faculty ratio may help to understand authors’ recommendation.

P. 12 Heading of “Limitations”.

Usually, limitation means limitation of authors’ research. This paragraph describes the limitations of searched paper and the last paragraph is the
suggestions by authors. Authors should consider a proper heading of this section or rewrite this section. For example, the last paragraph p.11 might be the limitation of this study.

**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.