Reviewer's report

Title: Providing Competency-Based Family Medicine Residency Training in Substance Abuse in the New Millennium: A Model Curriculum

Version: 1 Date: 1 September 2009

Reviewer: Julie Hadley

Reviewer's report:

This article presents a model curriculum for family medicine residency training in substance abuse. It is a descriptive paper which gives a broad overview detailing the development of a curriculum.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. This paper is very long in length and I feel that it would be much better if the authors could decrease the wordage to approx 3000 words as although some of the discussion is interesting it is not all essential for subject knowledge and understanding.

The overview of US curriculum section could be reduced significantly to focus on the current need for the new curriculum and also the challenges to substance abuse training section could also be reduced.

2. Did they authors use a recognised model to help them design the curriculum? If so please give details.

3. What are the overall aims and objects of the curriculum?

4. One of the strengths of the development is that curriculum is mapped to the core ACGME competencies. This could be focused upon more in the discussion.

5. More information is required about the academic level of the curriculum. Will the curriculum be accredited? How long will the course/ modules take to complete? Will the course/ programme be mandatory or elective? Will it be free or fee- paying for residents?

6. How will the curriculum be managed and implemented? And who will be responsible for the overall management?

7. How will the curriculum be assessed and evaluated?

8. A flow diagram demonstrating the organisation of the curriculum would be beneficial to demonstrate the relationship between the modules

9. Are the methods appropriate and well described?

The authors state that an extensive literature search was undertaken but ? the details of how the search was conducted. What databases were searched? What search terms were used? are not included in the methods section. Some details
regarding a search which was undertaken in PubMed/MEDLINE appear in the results section - Is this the original extensive literature search which was undertaken? Or is this a different search? This information would be better in the methods section so that readers can assess the scope and appropriateness of the searches.

10. In the section lessons from past substance abuse training the authors refer to reviews of continuing medical education/ alcohol screening project finding positive outcomes - what are these positive outcomes? And how have they helped in the development of the curriculum?

11. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes

Based on your assessment of the validity of the manuscript, what do you advise should be the next step?

- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest
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- An article of limited interest

Quality of written English
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- Acceptable

Statistical review
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- No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests
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'I declare that I have no competing interests'