Reviewer's report

Title: Undergraduate medical student perceptions and use of Evidence Based Medicine: A qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 22 April 2010

Reviewer: John Mahoney

Reviewer's report:

The title and abstract accurately convey the content of the manuscript. The overall quality the manuscript prose is good – in fact, it a pleasant read. The study aim is clearly stated and well-defined. The description of methods provides a good explanation of the methodological approach that was used, including the rationale for selecting a focus group technique. This appears to be an appropriate method that has resulted in believable and sound-appearing data.

I particularly appreciated the fashion in which the results were presented. The authors provided both a synthesis of the information derived from the focus groups, separated by themes, and selected quotes from focus group participants. The discussion and conclusions are well-balanced and supported by the data that was presented. The authors did a good job of describing the limitations of this work. The literature cited is appropriate and timely.

Summary
This is one of very few manuscripts that I have ever reviewed that has required nearly no revision to be acceptable for publication. The authors were successful in presenting what could be a somewhat dry subject in an interesting and engaging fashion that led to an informative read.

Major compulsory revisions
None.

Minor essential revisions
Under the background section in paragraph 4, the authors refer to a prior study of third year medical students’ self-perception of EBM skills. It would be helpful to the authors to clarify whether those were 3rd year medical students in the Australian system, US system, or some other system of medical education, so that the reader easily understands the level of students in that study, literature citation 12.

Discretionary revisions
None.

Based on my assessment of the validity of the manuscript, I advise that it should be accepted after minor essential revisions which the authors can be trusted to make.
I perceive that this manuscript will be of significant interest and utility to readers of BMC medical education. I would consider it to be an article of importance in its field. The authors disclosed an appropriate level of human subject protection oversight.

I declare that I have no competing interests in review of this manuscript.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.