Reviewer's report

Title: Development and Preliminary Psychometric Properties of a Well-Being Index for Medical Students

Version: 1 Date: 4 June 2009

Reviewer: Abdul Wahab Yousafzai

Reviewer's report:

I have pasted paragraphs from the article and added my comments in brackets.

Abstract:
Burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization), depression, mental quality of life (QOL), physical QOL, stress, and fatigue were domains identified for inclusion in the MSWBI.

(Quality Of Life essentially means both mental and physical quality, only quality of life will suffice than what author have mentioned)

Background:

Paragraph 2 page 4

These facts highlight the compelling need for medical schools to identify student distress (we use the term distress to broadly refer to depression, anxiety, burnout, and related mental health problems)

(Related mental health problems meaning what...? authors should be specific and clear).

Prompt identification of students in distress would allow schools to recognize the global health

(Noun global health should be replaced. I think ‘health related problems’ is more clear term) of their medical student population, provide assistance to those in greatest need (instead of ‘greatest need’ only need will suffice) and help prevent the serious consequences by alleviating student suffering.

Paragraph 3 page 5
Unfortunately, existing instruments used to assess distress are long, cumbersome to analyze, and typically measure only 1 domain of distress (e.g. depression, burnout)

(Needs to be referenced if reported previously or substitute it with simple and non judgmental statement)

In the absence of such an instrument, we have set out to develop a shorter measure of student distress (i.e. the Medical Student Well-Being Index, MSWBI) intended to screen for the common dimensions of distress experienced by medical students and identify the subset of students whose distress places them at risk for serious consequences.

Methods:

(It will be good to describe briefly why the authors have adopted this methodology and give reference if similar methods have been used previously.)

Paragraph 2 page 6

The Ad Hoc panel of Deans consisted of 8 Deans/Associated Deans from 7 diverse medical schools

(Diverse medical colleges meaning what? diverse in which sense?)

Group members have published extensively in the aforementioned fields.

(This sentence should be deleted)

Results:

Results section requires statistician’s review

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests