Reviewer’s report

Title: What are the learning needs of Australian GP registrars for quality prescribing?

Version: 1 Date: 22 July 2010

Reviewer: Simon R Maxwell

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This interesting paper addresses the issue of the learning needs of GP registrars in relation to prescribing. The authors studied the views of GP registrars using an online national survey, interviews and focus groups. The views were triangulated with the views of medical educators’ perceptions canvassed in semistructured interviews in order to gain a broader perspective of the registrars’ needs. The most common educational events attended were educational activities taking place in the workplace and through regional training providers. The rest of the learning opportunity seemed to be opportunistic in the workplace. The GP registrars indicated that they found difficulty in the transition from hospital prescribing to prescribing in the GP context, judging how well they were prescribing and identifying appropriate and efficient sources of information at the point-of-care.

General points

The weaknesses of the work are that (i) the survey focuses on the training of a particular group of doctors in one country — although they will be of relevance to many others with a similar training system, and (ii) the response rate for the survey was low although not untypical of this kind of survey in primary care amongst busy clinicians.

The continued involvement of Pharmaceutical Reps (P8) highlights a potentially important problem although the subsequent viewpoints gave some reassurance that there is scepticism amongst this group of younger doctors.

Lack of feedback is a really important aspect that is uncovered by this work which is probably true of a lot of prescribing throughout the healthcare sector.

The lack of support for trainee prescribers and the shortness of time to make complicated decisions are also familiar but are well described by the authors.

The complexity in the GP registrar-supervisor relationship resonates with experience elsewhere.

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