Reviewer's report

Title: Global health competencies and approaches in medical education: a literature review

Version: 1 Date: 29 October 2010

Reviewer: Michael H Kim

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10/28/2010
BMC Medical Education Peer Review of Global health competencies and approaches in medical education: a literature review.

Assessment
1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes. The authors specifically discussed competencies and educational approaches to global health education at the undergraduate level.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The methods are appropriate but I do not feel they are well described. It is unclear to me the reasoning behind the search strategy, specifically why the search was cross-referenced with “international educational exchange” and why articles were limited to 1996 to present. Also, I attempted to replicate their search strategy on OVID and only returned 6 articles. They cited 42.

3. Are the data sound?
The data does appear to be sound if all the relevant articles were obtained in the search strategy.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, as best as possible given the limited data set.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
The limitations, outside of the search strategy are clearly stated. The explanations of possible interpretations of the data were excellent.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
I am unsure of why the table 3 data was included. Given that they are the
ultimate aim of this paper that they should first be published under the committee that developed them and not just referenced as an acknowledgment. They appear to be present as the authors “suggested global health competencies for medical students”.

I would have liked to see discussion of how these competencies fit in with competencies for medical education in general.

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
Yes. It is clear and concise.

9. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes.

Suggestions
Discretionary revisions
1. The first sentence of your final paragraph begins “This review suggests …”. It appears to me that this implies that this recommendation is supported by the data in the article. I would suggest altering this to “We suggest…” or “The authors suggest …” or something like that.

Minor essential revisions
1. Clarify the search strategy in the methods. Specifically why “international educational exchanges” was used in the cross-referencing of articles.

Major compulsory revisions
None

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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.