Reviewer's report

Title: Pharmacology podcasts: a qualitative study of non-medical prescribing students use, perceptions and impact on learning

Version: 1 Date: 20 August 2010

Reviewer: John Sandars

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
[1] The title should more clearly reflect the "podcast" as audio lecture capture and the context (especially since in a medical education journal)
[2] The abstract should specify what they mean by "podcast" - this appears to be a full audio capture of a lecture downloaded from a VLE and also the unique context - non-medical and older (average age was 43)
[3] The initial introduction on "podcasting" should more fully describe what the educational intervention was - a downloadable audio file of an entire lecture from a VLE.
[4] The introduction should include the different types of podcasts (eg RSS fed/edited/enhanced with video or PowerPoint) and summarise the previous findings on perceived usefulness and usability - both from non-medical and nursing / medical. The evidence base is slim in journals but there are more unpublished reports from Google that are relevant. It is essential to compare like with like - that is, simple audio capture with edited or enhanced.
[5] The introduction should summarise the findings of their previously published paper since there is frequent referral back to this paper
[6] The uniqueness of the context should be made clear - older /non-medical. The previous studies are almost entirely young undergraduate students.
[7] The data analysis used a purposive sample of high and low users and it would be useful to see how the themes and illustrative comments related to these groups
[8] The discussion should emphasise the unique context and clearly state how the results are similar/different to other studies in undergraduates, especially with audio only full lecture capture, and if any studies in older students
[9] The discussion needs to include problems related to listening to full length audio only lecture capture and suggestions how they can be overcome
[10] The submitted article would benefit from careful proof reading for style eg avoiding phrases such as "in an in depth fashion" etc.

Minor / Discretionary Revisions - None
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have advised several publishers and commercial educational providers (including BMJ Learning) on the use of podcasting. I have not directly received fees for this work but have received fees for reviewing e-learning materials.