Reviewer's report

**Title:** An e-learning reproductive health module to support improved student learning and communication at a medical school in Egypt.

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 22 September 2011

**Reviewer:** Anthony Warrens

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

The abstract suggests that the study will compare traditional face-to-face learning with e-learning. In fact, on reading the Methods section, it appears that the study compares face-to-face learning with face-to-face learning PLUS e-learning. However, the Discussion highlights (for the first time) a 'limitation' that Group 1 students "might have" attended traditional lectures. It is surely important and accessible information to know that. The Discussion also says "Further on...most students in the e-learning group did not attend lectures". This is very important. What percentage of the Group is this true of (they write it is only true "Further on"). It is very difficult to interpret this study without greater clarity in this. More importantly, it does change the nature of the question being studied. Is the study asking about the impact of supplementary or alternative e-learning? This needs to be made much clearer throughout.

There was no attempt to assess retention of knowledge.

Turning to the questionnaire on attitudes and perceptions to the different modalities, the two were not alternatives for one group. Was there a difference in the perception of the face-to-face material between the two groups who did and did not have the e-learning?

My biggest concern with this paper is in the selection of each group. Participants in the e-learning group appear to have been self-selected. Does this not introduce a bias to select the best, most motivated students? How do the authors know that they are not detecting that difference rather than an effect of the e-learning supplement?

**Outputs:**

It would be useful to have quantitated achievement of learning outcomes in both groups.

No information is given about depth of learning and, as stated already, retention of knowledge.

**Results:** The first paragraph describes on the Group 1. What about group 2?
Discretionary Revision

It would be helpful if the authors would provide a URL to allow the reader to look at some of the material - or is it all proprietary?

In terms of the assessment, it would be useful to hear what attempt were made to maintain the security of the quizzes. How could they avoid sharing answers?

The Discussion is a little repetitive and could be shorter.

While generally good, some attention to the English is needed.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.