Reviewer’s report

Title: Why do general practitioners decline opportunities for feedback from trained peers on the quality of appraisal evidence?

Version: 1 Date: 6 December 2011

Reviewer: Ian Couper

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Minor essential revisions

There are wording issues in a number of places:

Page 3: The following sentence is incomplete: “It is now clear that appraisal will require to move from mere engagement to a demonstration of both learning for the doctor and resultant impact on patient care then by necessity the process must become more transparent and objective”

Page 5: The following statement appears to contain a non sequitur: “In order to further strengthen the evidence for the overall utility of the feedback model, we aimed to explore the views of west of Scotland GPs who had not yet participated.”

Page 6: “A second round of invitations was sent to a further purposive sample of 100 GPs, which elicited a further eight GPs who agreed to participate. A total of thirteen GPs were interviewed.”

The sampling of the first 100 GPs is described in detail; there is no detail about these. And how were the 13 chosen out of the 15?

Page 6: What does this mean? “Reflexivity was sought by the interviewer completing a comments sheet shortly after completion of each interview.”

Page 6: The language in this sentence does not sound right: “Each interview recording was listened through to check for inaccuracies in transcription.”

Page 15ff: The discussion is rather long, with a tendency to repeat the results; it needs to be shorter and sharper.

Page 18: There is a word missing in this sentence: “This contrasts with previous research which suggests that GPs are aware of the need for appraisal to evolve in support revalidation in order to ensure and maintain the confidence of patients and doctors”

Page 19: It seems some background information is needed to understand this statement: “A fundamental issue here is that in terms of the three core appraisal activities offered for external peer review only one group of peers has undergone the training to gain the ‘expertise’ necessary to ‘evaluate’ and ‘judge’ the elements of ‘professional practice’ that are under scrutiny from an appraisal (and regulatory) perspective.”

Page 19: Reword “Interviews were gained with GPs at range of stages in career”.

In the same sentence, is it “experience and roles” or “experience or roles”?
Page 20: What is NES? Also SEA and GMS on age 21.
Page 20: What does this mean? “This study did not attempt to comprehensively unpick the formation of individually held understandings and attitudes; although we did identify some factors that appeared to modify GPs perspectives.”
Page 20: Who is “we” referred to under Conclusions?

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

**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