Reviewer's report

Title: Spirituality and Health in the Curricula of Medical Schools in Brazil

Version: 1 Date: 25 June 2012

Reviewer: Romer Ocanto

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Major revisions
1) The survey questionnaires fail to include important and relevant issues related to the inclusion of S/H in the medical curricula. Research has shown that factors affecting the inclusion of S/H subjects is curricular time, in addition to funding and training support. to assure continuity and reinforcement throughout the entire medical school curriculum.

2) The paper would benefit by mentioning what the national policy is regarding S/H if any. More importantly, the questionnaire should include questions about curricular competencies and methods to evaluate these competencies.

3) Successful implementation of an S/H curricula will depend on the type of teamwork available within the school and there is nothing in the study assessing this factor.

Minor revisions
1) No mention of participants providing an informed consent to participate in the study

Discretionary revisions
1) The authors point out that no information exist on teaching S/H in medical schools worldwide. However, the next paragraph cites a recent paper published in Brazil. After conducting a search on PubMed I came out with several papers making reference to teaching spirituality into medical curricula in schools in Australia and South Korea, for example. Even though deficient, to say that there is no information isn't completely accurate.

2) The paper must include references to the different Institutes and foundations in this country and the UK that focus on S/H curricula; namely, the Templeton Foundation or the George Washington University Institute. These groups have conducted research in the US on the subject and the study would have benefited by using a different type of assessment.

I was surprised not to see Cobb's textbook in the reference list, or Koenig et al. paper from Duke University. I was also very surprised not to see any references to S/H in nursing schools curricula, which are usually ahead of medical schools in subjects like this.

What about online education? is there any related to S/H teaching in Brazil?
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing interests (financial or otherwise) with people or organizations related to this manuscript.