Reviewer's report

Title: Ordering patterns for laboratory and radiology tests by students from different undergraduate medical curricula

Version: 1 Date: 12 March 2013

Reviewer: Alexander Fuld

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(Minor Essential Revisions)
- There are multiple instances where the English is awkwardly phrased and unclear. For example:
  1) "Alas, a study from the early 90th of the last century demonstrated that the medical history led to the final diagnosis in 76% of patients from an outpatient clinic while laboratory investigations did so in only 11%." "Alas" implies a subjective negative connotation and does not belong here. I assume they mean to indicate a study that was from the "1990s" but that is not clear.
  2) "VI curricula contain fewer details of basic science and clinical knowledge [20] which, on the other hand, might force students to apply adequate strategic ways of approaching a patient problem." I do not understand what "adequate strategic ways" means and how a curriculum that has fewer details would lead to their use.
  3) "A growing overutilization of radiology procedures in incidents where they will not improve diagnostic processes or patient outcomes has been noted in general and its potential hazard to patients by overexposing them to unnecessary radiation doses has been addressed [30]." Incidents should perhaps be "instances"?? "Has been addressed" does not make sense here.
  4) "Lack of certainty, confidence, or experience in the diagnosis have been identified as potential reasons for an overuse of imaging procedures "
    This should be " A lack of X, Y, X has been..."
  5) "Physicians' unawareness of such radiation risks has already been of major concern in recent years [34]." "Already" does not make sense here.
  6) "The strength of our study is its prototypic assessment character for medical graduates in a simulated realistic work situation with a validity argument." Does not make sense. What is "prototypic assessment character?" What is a "validity argument?"

Discretionary Revisions:

7) I am not sure what to make of the fact that there was correlation between the labs for Netherland students but not the German students and FOC score, and that there was no correlation for either group for the radiologic tests. This seems to undermine the conclusion that the VI students are approaching decision making in a better and more judicious manner with respect to test ordering.
While it sounds like the students were assessed in terms of the FOC described, does that correlate with reaching the correct diagnosis? And similarly were the VI students more or less likely than the non-VI students to reach the correct diagnosis?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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