Reviewer's report

Title: Team-based learning for residents: a mixed methods study

Version: 1 Date: 31 March 2013

Reviewer: Nachiket Shankar

Reviewer's report:

The authors are to be commended on a generally well written article with interesting insights. However, there are areas of the article that need revision before possible publication.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background
1) The rationale of using TBL for residents needs to be made clear. Practicing clinicians are used to solving and learning from problems encountered during patient care. They are generally self-directed learners and need to function as part of a team. How would TBL improve learning in this context?
2) Are there any conceptual frameworks that can be used to justify the use of TBL for resident training?

Methods
1) Was there any attempt to calculate a sample size for the study? If not, this needs an explanation.
2) A randomized control trial would be an ideal study design to compare lectures and TBL. What is the justification for the use of an inferior study design?
3) A separate paragraph for the statistical analysis employed needs to be added.

Minor essential revisions

General comments
1) The authors use the colon (:) and semi-colon (;) inappropriately at many places in the document.
2) Sentences should not start with digits.

Title
Please add the word Psychiatry before residents.

Background
The 4th paragraph (Overall....) can be removed as it repeats information contained in the previous paragraphs.
5th paragraph - '.....in a group of residents’. Please add the word psychiatry before residents.
Methods
The paragraph on ethical clearance can be shifted before the 'Setting'
2nd Paragraph (Setting) - The meaning of the sentence "We modified......" is not clear.
5th Paragraph (Structure of the module) penultimate sentence - "When prompted...." needs to be explained more clearly.
6th and 7th paragraphs (Measures) - Please add the abbreviations after the full form when they are used for the first time. For example Classroom Engagement Survey (CES).

Results
2nd paragraph (CES) - Is this a valid comparison? There are many factors (for example topic for lecture, lecturer characteristics) that could influence the result. How can the difference that was observed be attributed to TBL? Was there any attempt to control for these potential confounders?
3rd paragraph (VTS) - As a comparison is being made before and after an intervention in a single group, a paired sample T test would be the appropriate test of significance to use.

Discussion
1st paragraph, 3rd sentence - "The key....." The sentence reads awkwardly and needs to be modified.
2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence - "A meta-analysis.." Same as above.

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.