Reviewer's report

Title: Medical residents' perceptions of their competencies and training needs in health care management: an international comparison

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Reviewer: Peter Baume

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Some questions are not important enough to justify study - for example, measuring the number of grains of sand on a beach would be original but would not be important. One wonders if this paper is important enough to justify the study.

The sample is biased. The authors seem to have used a "snowball" technique, approaching people they knew or met. Only one jurisdiction in Australia is studied (when there are many) and residents at hospitals that did not have medical education officers were excluded. Only one University in Canada was studied. Only those in Denmark that had attended mandatory courses were considered. And so on. It is necessary to justify this degree of bias by convincing evidence that the limitations on inclusion have not biased results. The low participation rate, especially in Australia, is recognised but not explained adequately.

The use of self-assessment indicated what were the perceptions of medical residents in the four countries but did not allow any useful comparison of countries. To be fair, the title of the manuscript talks of "perceptions". But it does not follow that self-assessment is the same as an absolute measure of competence - and the authors did not discuss this difference.

Most study programs are full already and more of any one thing might well mean less of another. This possibility is not recognised and is certainly not discussed. The authors are correct in saying that this is a graduate need and not an undergraduate need.

The perceived needs for management training did not cover all the necessary governance competencies.

A trained statistician will be needed to examine the statistical methods used.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
No competing interests.