Reviewer's report

Title: History-taking and empathetic communication - two sides of the same coin?

Version: 1 Date: 24 January 2013

Reviewer: Neil Harrison

Reviewer's report:

Major

Minor

Discretionary

In the discussion you mention that only 56.4% of potentially relevant questions were asked and that this is naturally concerning. In reality of course a diagnosis or the most appropriate next step in management may be accurately reached without asking every possible relevant question. Were there any figures for the accuracy of the students diagnosis relating to their individual % relevant questions asked? If students happened to be very good at clinical reasoning (although hard to assess) then maybe it would be appropriate not to ask all relevant questions?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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