Reviewer's report

Title: Associations of selection criteria and socio-demographic factors in medical students with intended rural site of practice following graduation

Version: 2 Date: 25 August 2014

Reviewer: Sandra Nicholson

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for your submission which I read with interest.

It examines two important issues in medical selection currently
1. widening access
2. future workforce requirements

It was well written, clear aims and an appropriate methodology was employed.

I would make the following suggestions as minor changes.

Results
line 348

The number of subjects withdrawing for these reasons is an important point and I would advise that this is stated in numbers not just as a table reference please.

Discussion
lines 387-389

This comment is important and if possible the authors should provide more information about whether students who state a preference for rural practice are more likely to withdraw because of academic performance and whether there are any associated factors concerning this finding.

I think the discussion would benefit from opening up the debate about aptitude tests/medical school tests/role of selection concerning some of the relevant international debates for example in line 405:

I wonder if the authors would like to comment further about whether world-wide their findings concerning the use of UMAT, as an aptitude test, and widening access by potentially lowering the threshold, has relevance? Is this just an Australian rural/urban specialist/generalist issue? No I don't think it is and this gives further credence to your work.

Similarly where possible draw in other examples of similar issues eg Cleland et
al's work on career preferences of Scottish medical students. The UK has a current GP recruitment crisis.

Line 419
These comments while relevant are rather speculative. have you any further information to reference ? Qualitative data for example?

Lines 484-487
This statement requires further backing and a reference please