Reviewer's report

Title: The relationship between medical student learning opportunities and preparedness for practice: A questionnaire study

Version: 1  Date: 3 August 2014

Reviewer: Vicky Tallentire

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for a well-written paper on a subject close to my heart and of significant interest to both the medical education community and the general public.

No major compulsory revisions.

Minor essential revisions:

1. I think it is worth adding into the discussion a paragraph or two about the relationship between confidence, competence and preparedness. Clearly the three concepts are related (in my mind anyway), but there must be an optimum level of confidence (with over-confidence perhaps presenting even more danger to patients than under-confidence). Does preparedness follow the same pattern - i.e. is their an optimum level or is more always better?

2. A small point is that my understanding of Tomorrow’s Doctors is that they constitute statutory requirements of medical schools rather than 'guidelines' (start of results section).

Discretionary revisions:

1. I am interested in the fact that you excluded overseas trained doctors from your analysis. I understand your rationale (that their training schemes would not have fallen under the auspices of the GMC), but presumably the UK general public would hope that they too are adequately prepared to deal with acutely unwell patients. Perhaps worth a little more justification.

2. I don’t think that assisting an F1 with the care of an acutely unwell patient three or more times constitutes 'substantial exposure' (results section), but perhaps a medical student would feel differently!

Overall, a good paper that is well worth publication.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
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.