Author's response to reviews

Title: Effects of Geriatric Clinical Skills Training on the Attitudes of Medical Students

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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RE: MS: 6135986081256230: Effects of a Geriatric Clinical Skills Training on Attitudes of Medical Students

Dear Dr. Nicholson

We thank you again for evaluating our manuscript and sending us further Editorial Comments. We now re-submit our manuscript for re-consideration as Research Article to BMC Medical Education. Please find hereafter our point-by-point responses to your concerns:

1. Lines 235-6: “This study shows that a brief skills-oriented educational intervention has the potential to improve medical students’ attitudes towards elderly patients.”
   Should be replaced with the following suggestion to avoid over-inflating the findings.
   "This study shows that after a brief skills-oriented educational intervention medical students’ attitudes towards elderly patients improved and we discuss the possible reasons for this change."
   Response: We agree and replaced the sentence with your suggestion (page 11, first paragraph).

2. Whilst some editing has occurred within the discussion section I do not consider that you have specifically responded to comment made by reviewer 2 as follows: “Following on from this premise, I do have some issues with some of the discussion and conclusions that you draw. For example, you infer that it is the CST intervention that is
responsible for this "improvement" in attitudes whereas it may be for other reasons that have occurred during the time since the first half of students were assessed." Your response: “We think we already addressed this limitation, but tried to clarify this aspect as part of the editing with the professional translator (page 12, third paragraph)”, does not indicate for example, what the students are doing/learning inbetween the CST sessions which may also account for their attitude changes. Are they doing ward work for example? The minimum that is required is a simple addition to sentence on line 278: "It is also possible that other unmeasured factors, such as learning occurring independently of the CST, could have caused the observed attitude changes.” Response: We agree and added the suggested statement (page 12, last paragraph).

3. Actually, and I apologise that I missed this initially, you do not describe in the methods section what the students are doing inbetween the CST sessions and this should be added please.
Response: We agree and describe in the methods section what the students were doing inbetween the CST session (page 6, first paragraph).

4. To strengthen your conclusions and as medical students' attitudes are an important facet of clinical care I would make an optional suggestion that your final sentence is re-phrased as follows: "Future skills-oriented educational interventions should take into account research findings that including attitude-building elements may enhance the effect of the geriatric CST on medical students' attitudes.”
Response: We agree and re-phrased the final sentence (page 13, last paragraph).

We look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Andreas Schoenenberger