Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 2 Date: 22 June 2014

Reviewer: Sandra Nicholson

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Authors

I read your submission with interest as further understanding of medical students’ attitudes, how they develop and what affects this, is required in medical education.

The abstract and background sections meet requirements. Ethical permissions were sought.

Whilst it is too late to change your methodology I do think you need to comment on why your design did not include appropriately identifying and following up those students with low attitude scores before the educational intervention to see what specifically was the effect of the educational intervention on these students’ attitudes.

What you report is a non-significant increase in "attitudes" as measured by applying the scoring to half the group before the intervention and the other half afterwards. You do report some of the limitations of such methods but not why you chose to do it like this.

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.

The conclusions are weak and would be improved by highlighting the seminal points from an enhanced discussion section that elaborates further on how the findings relate to the wider literature, for example you comment the resource distribution scale showed the largest change but did not speculate why?

Furthermore I would like to see a more confident recommendation based on your findings as to how you would advise educators to proceed in this area.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

I declare that I have no competing interests