Author's response to reviews

Title: Can Standardized Patients Replace Physicians As OSCE Examiners?

Authors:

Kevin McLaughlin (kevin.mclaughlin@calgaryhealthregion.ca)
Laura Gregor (lgregor@hotmail.com)
Allan Jones (ajone@ucalgary.ca)
Sylvain Coderre (coderre@ucalgary.ca)

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BMC Medical Education

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Can standardized patients replace physicians as OSCE examiners?

Thank you for the helpful reviews of this manuscript. I have addressed each of the reviewers comments as detailed below:

Reviewer: Amy V Blue

Major compulsory #1. See page 10, paragraph 2. The suggested reference has also been added.

Major compulsory #2. Each of the questions on the questionnaire referred only to the SP stations (page 7 paragraph 3) and were aimed at evaluating the attitude of students towards the use of SP in general.

Minor essential #1. Page 6, paragraph 3.

Minor essential #2. Page 10, paragraph 1, line 4.

Reviewer: Glen Bandiera

Major compulsory #1. I agree with the comments about the weaknesses. Unfortunately this study cannot address these (an ongoing study will) and I think that with the present data all that we can do is acknowledge that there are these weaknesses that we are trying to resolve with a follow-up study. As to the implications of the physicians knowing the students this has been included in the discussion (page 10, paragraph 1, line 4).

Major compulsory #2. Page 11, paragraph 2, line 8.
While I agree that student opinion on the use of SP examiners is important, I think that rater satisfaction alone is a poor justification for utilizing SP examiners.

I hope that I have managed to address these points to the reviewer’s satisfaction.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Kevin McLaughlin
(Corresponding Author)