Reviewer's report

Title: Case-based exercises fail to improve medical students' information management skills: a controlled trial

Version: 1 Date: 17 January 2006

Reviewer: Amy V Blue

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The authors have given consideration to several factors which may have contributed to their findings (intervention did not adequately teach information management skills, the SP case did not accurately evaluate information management skills, or students could not apply the information skills practiced in the sessions to a one-on-one SP encounter). Additionally, I am wondering if the students were not able to apply/transfer the skills taught in the case-based discussions to the SP encounter because the nature of the skills to be used in the SP encounter were different in context (checking drug interaction, knowing how to counsel about international travel) than those learned in the case-based discussions (select appropriate cardiac diagnostic studies, guide diagnosis and management, develop a management plan, etc.). The authors may want to consider this possibility.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.