Author's response to reviews

Title: Learning to Mark: a qualitative study of the experiences and concerns of medical markers.

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Author's response to reviews:

28/02/2006
To, the Editor, BioMed Central Editorial office

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your response to the paper we submitted, received 27th Jan 06. I am replying on behalf of Dr Wood, who is on maternity leave, and would be grateful if all correspondence could be addressed to me. We have now revised our manuscript, taking on all the points raised by the two reviewers, which were very helpful, and hope the paper is better as a result. I am giving a point by point response to the two reviewers below, also showing where the changes have been made according to the current page numbers of the manuscript we are resending today.

I have also gone through the manuscript formatting checklist to ensure the manuscript conforms to all of the points.

Responses to reviewers' comments on 'Learning to mark' paper submitted to Biomed Central in December 2005.

Reviewer 1: Brian McKinstry

Major compulsory revisions:
* Description of how the sample was obtained (did anyone refuse to take part?)
Sampling method discussed in more detail on pg 5. No-one refused to take part, sampling was purposive, selecting 2 new markers, 2 with moderate experience and 2 with experience. The pilot interview was with a marker with a lot of experience of marking, and as his interview did not reveal any major areas that needed further development of the interview schedule, it was contributed to the data pool
* Sentence in the discussion outlining possible weaknesses of the study (size, generalizability and validity)
Now discussed in detail on pg 18, first paragraph of the 'conclusions' section.

Discretionary revisions:
* Statement about how this study might lead on to further research
Discussed on pg 20, last paragraph of the section 'conclusions'.

Reviewer 2: Sarah Peters

Major compulsory revisions:
* No theoretical framework provided for the analysis.
Theoretical framework now added and discussed in detail on pg 6, 'methods' section, with reference to Boxes 1 and 2 and first paragraph of 'results' section.
* Results and Discussion section should be written separately.
Pgs 7-18 revised accordingly - results only includes the presentation of themes with supporting quotations, discussion of meaning now separate. 'Conclusions' section used to discuss implications of these findings and discussion of study design on interpretation of findings and generalisability.
Discussion of weaknesses of the study and implications of these now discussed in more detail on pg 18 (see above).

Minor essential revisions:
* Details of literature search unnecessary
These details have been removed from the paper. (pg 4).

Discretionary revisions:
* Figure/box presenting the themes
This box has now been inserted (pg 8).

We hope these revisions will be found acceptable and look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes

Kamila Hawthorne

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