Reviewer’s report

Title: A Systematic Review of Tests of Empathy in Medicine

Version: 3  Date: 12 April 2007

Reviewer: David Alan Powis

Reviewer’s report:

General
The authors have responded to the suggestions I made in my initial review of their paper, but it is disappointing to note that although they have located both articles I alerted them to they chose not to include one of them on the basis that the article was not identified by their search strategy. With respect to the other article its content is now extracted in the table, but barely mentioned in the text. As a consequence the particular test of ‘empathy’ reported in the two new articles is not given the same consideration as the others in their review.

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

The term ‘validity’ is unpacked satisfactorily in an explanatory box in the paper, but the term is often used rather loosely in the text of the paper. In particular it would be appropriate in many places in the text to state ‘predictive validity’ rather than use just the unqualified term ‘validity’.

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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)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I am one of the team that has developed a test of empathy. Our description and evaluations of that test have been published in the two papers that I referred the authors to, and which are mentioned again in my re-review report above.