Author's response to reviews

Title: Competency-Based Evaluation Tools for Integrative Medicine Training in Family Medicine Residency: A Pilot Study

Authors:

Benjamin Kligler (bkligler@chpnet.org)
Mary Koithan (mkoithan@nursing.arizona.edu)
Victoria Maizes (vmaizes@ahsc.arizona.edu)
Meg Hayes (hayesm@ohsu.edu)
Craig Schneider (SCHNEC@mmc.org)
Patricia Lebensohn (plebenso@u.arizona.edu)
Susan Hadley (hadleys@chc1.com)

Version: 2 Date: 1 February 2007

Author's response to reviews: see over
Reviewer 1 (Victor Sierpina)

Major Revisions

None requested

Minor Revisions

None requested.

Discretionary Revisions

*Regarding the definition of Integrative Medicine, we have chosen to leave this as is since this was the definition we used when the fellowship curriculum was designed.*

*Regarding the sentence on page 5 “The details of the IFM curriculum...” we have added a reference.*

Reviewer 2 (Mark Albanese)

Major Revisions

1. How does the Direct Observation Evaluation Tool compare to the Mini-CEX used by the ABIM?
   *We have added a reference to the Mini-CEX to the article and clarified on page 7 how the tool used here expands on it.*

2. OSCE usually refers to Objective Structured Clinical Examination…
   *We have corrected our error here and provided a more detailed explanation in the text on page 6, 8 an.*

3. It appears that each OSCE is an interaction with a single standardized patient…..
   *We have added a sentence to the text acknowledging the problems with generalizing from a single standardized patient and describing our plans for future versions of this OSCE.*

4. Referring to data in reference 3 makes interpretation of the results extremely difficult. Please report them again in table 6 so as to make it easier for the reader to understand the points being made…
   *We have chosen not to add the results from the initial OSCE to Table 6 as we felt this would be too confusing given that the version of OSCE 1 reported in Table 6 is totally revised from the OSCE I described in reference 3. We did add a footnote to Table 6 restating the results from reference 3 and clarifying the reason these results are not included in the Table.*

5. The interpretation of the results in Table 4 needs to include some estimate of variability…..
We have completely revised Tables 4 and 5 as per the reviewer’s suggestions and agree this provides a clearer picture of the results which includes an estimate of variability. The results of the DO evaluation are now all presented in Table 4 and those of the TP evaluation in Table 5. We have also added the following sentence to the discussion section to address the reviewers concerns regarding our small “n:” “Of course it is also possible that due to our small “n” and variability across sites, these results represent evaluation artifact or confounding rather than actual weakness in performance and/or curriculum.”

Minor Revisions

1. DO and TP need to be defined on page 9. RRC on page 12 needs to be defined. These definitions have been added.

Reviewer 3 (Lawrence Reich)

Major Revisions

1. In the Abstract—Methods section: the statement in the last line that descriptive statistics were used to examine the data is inappropriate. Descriptive statistics can only describe, not examine. This has been corrected.

2. Page 5, 3rd paragraph. A reference or two would be useful after the statement “The details of the IFM curriculum….” A reference has been added here.

3. In regards to the two objectives stated in this paragraph, the title of the paper would imply that the 2nd objective is really the primary focus. I suggest either rephrasing this section or revising the title… This paragraph has been revised to address this concern.

4. Page 9, last sentence. Again, the use of “descriptive statistics” to address a goal is inappropriate. This sentence has been revised.

5. Page 10, last paragraph, line 4. The low sample size and therefore the fragility of the percentages should be acknowledged. Along these lines, the use of the phrase “clearly supports” seems to be overstating the conclusion…. This paragraph has been revised to address these concerns.

6. The last paragraph on this page presents conclusions and speculations as if they were results…. We have revised this paragraph to clarify that the data suggest possibilities but cannot be regarded as proving any specific conclusions.
Minor Revisions

These are not listed here individually as there were numerous corrections, but all have been addressed in the revised submission.