Author's response to reviews

Title: Innovations in curriculum design: a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching statistics to undergraduate medical students

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Dear Dr Da-Silva,

Re: MS: 7462070701645998 - Innovations in curriculum design: a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching statistics to undergraduate medical students

Thank you for provisionally accepting the above paper for publication in BMC Medical Education. In response to your request I have added a statement to the statistical methods section about ethics approval. For your information the first paragraph on statistical methods is below with the new text in quotes:

In order to evaluate the new teaching approach and compare it with the old one an evaluation questionnaire was distributed to students at the end of the final teaching session, for two cohorts: the last cohort to be taught using the old approach and the first cohort to be taught using the new approach. "Ethics approval for this was sought and but as it was regarded as a teaching evaluation in line with standard departmental teaching policy full ethics approval was not deemed necessary". The final teaching session occurred at the same point in the academic calendar for both cohorts. Every student who attended the final statistics session for both cohorts was asked to fill in the evaluation questionnaire and hand it in as they left the lecture theatre. The questionnaires were all anonymous and completion was not compulsory. As completion was anonymous, no attempt was made to link individual student responses to grades. In addition to collecting basic data on the students including their age, sex and previous level of statistics learning, they were asked to define two of the most fundamental concepts of statistics, a p-value and confidence interval, and answer some questions about their beliefs and attitudes to the subject. These beliefs were measured on a 5-point likert-type scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. For each student their ability to define a P-value and a confidence interval was graded from zero (no idea) to 5 (text-book perfect answer) by two of the research team, both of whom had extensive knowledge of statistics. This grading process was undertaken with the assessors blinded to which cohort the students
belonged to. Where the individual assessors were unsure of which category value (0 to 5) to assign, agreement was reached after moderation between assessors.

In addition, I also note reviewer 1’s comment about language and have changed ‘family practitioner’s surgery’ to ‘family practitioner’s office’.

Finally, I have gone through the formatting checklist as requested in order to ensure that the uploaded version conforms to the journal requirements.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future

Yours sincerely

Dr J Freeman