Reviewer's report

Title: Clinical Training: Simulation program for phlebotomy

Version: 1 Date: 7 June 2007

Reviewer: sally Santen

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General
This is a study that looked at the satisfaction of residents (students) in a newly developed program for training for placement of IVs.

General comments: Shouldn't the real outcome be successful placement of IVs after the program. Satisfaction with the program is nice but what we really care about is the true outcome which would have been easy to obtain by asking the residents did they succeed on their first IV? And Were there communication issues with patient?
The intermediate outcome was the success of the students on step 5. This was not reported in the results. Another better outcome would have been success of the students on drawing blood on each other (step 6 of the study)
Most of this program is not innovative. Medical students have been using simulated veins and each other for a long time. Nursing has been doing it for even longer. The novel part was the videotaping and debriefing. But this is more of a communication issue rather than a skills issue.

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

Major revisions:
Abstract: I presume lines 26- 30 are the objectives of the study. However, “to formulate a simulation program is not a research goal. Revise the objective of the study.
The grammar is poor with sentences not having verbs, etc. ( rest of paper was ok)
Authors did not demonstrate unique educational impact- this conclusion is over-reaching.

Background: nice review of the issues in Japanese medical education.
The background focuses on issues for medical students, but the study is on residents. There is a disconnect in the subject of the research. Authors should add more info about resident training

Methods: line 98-99. It says that students’ techniques and communication was assessed. These are not reported. Regardless, is it really fair to report this data when it is the students first time doing it?? So either omit this info or report the results. I would prefer the former

Line 111: (step 5) shouldn’t the assessment have been done by a clinician rather than a student who has nc been trained in the case, nor is an expert. This cannot be changed. But authors should justify the use of colleagues for this assessment

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

How long is the whole training sessions with debriefing and all?
How many residents chose not to draw blood on their colleagues

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'