Reviewer's report

**Title:** Residents' Perceptions and Attitudes towards a Night Float System

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 30 May 2009

**Reviewer:** Frida M Fischer

**Reviewer’s report:**

The manuscript presents a descriptive study conducted among interns and residents of a Pittsburg hospital about their perceptions of a night float working system. According to the authors, this study is more comprehensive and updated than former publications related to the same issue.

It is important to discuss the working schedules of training interns and residents, as a high workload may have important implications in the patient care, errors, accidents, and medical education.

A revision of the manuscript is required before publication. I noticed the following items that need improvement/changes:

**A major compulsory revision:**

1) Attitudes, perceptions and opinions have different meanings. This study did not evaluate attitudes, but perceptions expressed as opinions of the respondents.

2) Socio-demographics were not included in the description and evaluation of the outcomes due to a night float system. Since they can largely influence the residents/intern perceptions, they should be part of the results, and be included in the analyses.

3) What were the six domains covered by the questionnaire? I noticed four of them: patient care, education, medical errors, overall satisfaction. Please, clarify.

4) What does it mean "shift-work mentality "? please clarify

5) Along the discussion section, the word "attitude" was used as synonymous of perception and opinion. It shouldn't, as they have different meanings.

6) Although is mentioned that a large number of variables was included in the questionnaire (115 items) most of them were not discussed in this manuscript. The identification of the variables should be included.

7) The authors concluded that the implementation of a night float system is a positive change of residents/intern work schedules. They also mentioned it reduced fatigue, stress, improvement of mood, and quality of life. Since each of these variables were not defined, and are composed by several factors that were not evaluated in this study, the conclusions of this manuscript should be based in the limited descriptive evaluations.

**Minor essential revision:**
It should be clearly mentioned, which data basis were searched, and how many years the literature review was covered.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'