Reviewer's report

Title: Developing leadership skills of leaders in postgraduate medical education. Effect of combining a leadership course and multi-source feedback.

Version: 1 Date: 3 October 2009

Reviewer: Jim Price

Reviewer's report:

This paper addresses an important area in medical education at the postgraduate level since there is little in the literature about the effectiveness of different programs in terms of leadership development of medical educationalists.

Discretionary
The abstract is reasonably clear although the way the ‘results’ section is written is a little confusing. Perhaps insert ‘MSF’ or ‘other’ before the word respondents in line 4. There is a double negative in Line 5.

The background sets the scene well and the study design is clearly set out in the methods section. The results showed little difference overall and even the self rated improvement in techniques could well be accounted for other factors that some such a selection bias, as is acknowledged in the discussion. Perhaps there might have been a little more analysis/comment on the large number of exclusions in the control group as compared with the intervention group.

It would also have been interesting to have known the medical specialties of the participants -- especially when all the issue of self-confidence as discussed (top of page 12). It may be interesting to see for instance whether surgeons are more self-confident than physicians. I wonder if you had addressed this point in anyway?

Whilst this paper shows that the addition of leadership course to multisource feedback might improve leadership skills at one year, a multi-method approach including qualitative data might well have offered stronger evidence for this.

Although the impact of this paper will probably not be huge, I think it is important to publish results where minimal impact is found from what one might have expected to be a significant intervention. As such it adds to the academic debate in this area.

Minor
At the bottom of page four letters CRE introduced without definition., and there are a few other grammatical errors (e.g. In 5 page 4 – ‘of the leader’ are, in line 2 page 7 -- "participants made two assignments" is poor English.)

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:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests