Reviewer's report

Title: A web-based simulation of a longitudinal clinic used in a 4-week ambulatory rotation: a cohort study

Version: 3 Date: 8 December 2008

Reviewer: Veronica Michaelsen

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ABSTRACT:
The title and the abstract are clear and accurately convey the methods and results of this study.

INTRODUCTION:
The introduction clearly defines the research question and grounds it in the relevant educational literature. Specifically, the rationale for the design of the COCOS was clearly stated and the outcome measures were defined.

METHODS:
The methods section detailed the development of COCOS including budget, case author involvement, case selection criteria and learning objectives. Residents at a single institution were used with COCOS materials offered to the study group as a adjunct to the current curriculum. Self-report was used for both confidence and patient exposure/load questions and were, therefore, subjective. Pre- and Post-test data was used for knowledge assessment. The amount of time spent using COCOS was not recorded. Statistical methods were not reviewed in detail but appear to be appropriate.

RESULTS:
Results are clearly reported in sections that correlate to the methods. The data appear to be sound and are supplied in both text and table forms with appropriate measures of statistical significances.

Discretionary Revision: “Assessment of confidence” section has no results listed and refers only to Table 4. Thus the phrase “Statistically significant increases” is difficult to interpret. Please consider adding numeric results into text as was done in other results sections.

Discretionary Revision: “Resident satisfaction” first paragraph, number should be written out to start the sentence.

DISCUSSION:
Discussion is well written and clearly defines the limitations of the study. Further research by this group as well as other proposed research is outlined in this section.
TABLES and FIGURES:
The Tables and Figures add clarity to the Results and Methods sections.
Discretionary Revision: In Table1: “5)” needs capitalization

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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