Reviewer's report

Title: Family physicians information seeking behaviors: A survey comparison with other specialties

Version: 1 Date: 5 October 2004

Reviewer: Jocelyn Lockyer

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a very well written article. It extends previous work by some of the same authors found in Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions Volume: 22 Issue: 01 Page: 033. This article, unlike its predecessor, provides a comparison of family physician and specialist information seeking behavior. This previous article grouped all physicians together without recognition that there might be differences based on primary care/specialty status.

The methods section is fairly well described and clear. The paper would be strengthened by describing the survey itself. The abstract mentions 17 multiple choice questions but the description and results sections do not suggest multiple choice questions. This needs to be clarified.

The data collection and handling are appropriate.

The results are clearly presented with tables that illuminate the data. It would be useful to know how many surveys were actually sent out in order to achieve the 2200 respondents, regardless of the fact that Cochran's sampling technique indicated that 2200 was appropriate.

The discussion and conclusions are balanced and supported by the data. The writing is clear.

The abstract states (methods) that the survey consisted of 17 multiple choice questions. I cannot see any evidence that the line of questioning was MCQ, in the traditional sense. The authors might check that.

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

I think clarity on the instrument and whether it was a multiple choice format is important.

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

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
I would suggest that they reference their previous work published in JCEHP

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
NONE