Reviewer's report

Title: Patient safety in primary care: a questionnaire study among general practitioners in The Netherlands

Version: 1 Date: 30 May 2009

Reviewer: James Dunbar

Reviewer's report:

Very little is known about patient safety in primary care. I don't feel that your study adds very much in its present form. Is it because your survey is based on a qualitative study and therefore you have a circular argument?

Major compulsory revisions

It is now well established that leadership, performance, culture and collaboration are crucial to patient safety in primary care. (Scott, Mannion, Marshall and Davies. Does organisational culture influence health care performance? A review of the evidence. J Health Services Research Policy 2003; Page 112) We know that medical errors in primary care occur in administrative systems, laboratory and diagnostic imaging processes, and as a result of the shortfalls in the knowledge and skills of different care providers, as well as medication errors. An additional reference is Dovey et al. A preliminary taxonomy of medical errors in family practice. Quality and Safety in healthcare 2002; 11:233-238.

Already the Manchester Patient Safety Tool exists allowing primary care teams to assess themselves and make plans for improvement.


I believe you need to revise your paper so that your findings are better anchored into what we already know.

Your survey response rate is acceptable, but there are major problems with the English language such that the paper is not publishable until it has been thoroughly revised for content and language.

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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