Reviewer's report

Title: Paucity of qualitative research in general medical and health services and policy research journals: Analysis of publication rates

Version: 1 Date: 8 February 2011

Reviewer: Kevin Pottie

Reviewer's report:

This research paper documents the low rate of publication of qualitative research in general medical journal. The methods and search strategies are well described and appropriate, the data sound and the manuscript is focused and well written. The authors title and abstract are informative and convey the main research focus on findings. The limitations of the search and selection process are described, and the discussion highlights some of the biases that may explain the findings. The writing is succinct and acceptable.

The search for qualitative studies in high impact general medical journals over a 10 year period and the documentation of the rarity of these publications represents unique and important contribution to the medical literature.

Discretionary Revisions –
The authors discuss why journals may be disinclined not to publish qualitative research, and so I think it would be useful to have some discussion of the forces at play at general medical journals that lead to publication of qualitative research. For example, the BMJ appears to be an outlier in terms of having published at least several dozen qualitative papers.

Minor Essential Revisions - none
Major Compulsory Revisions- none

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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