Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of economic factors on migration considerations among Icelandic specialist doctors: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 10 July 2013

Reviewer: John Colin Harris Dewdney

Reviewer's report:


1. General comments
Interesting short paper
The survey questionnaires provide useful baseline material for follow-up work e.g. by now it may be possible to see how many of the specialists who were thinking seriously about emigration three years ago did actually make the move.

2. Revisions

2.1 Major compulsory revisions:

2.1.1 The Discussion section includes mention of Mullan’s “emigration factor”. The statement “... the emigration factor was 23 in 2005 (318 emigrants and 1060 immigrants)” seems to me to be somewhat misleading. It is highly unlikely that there were 1060 immigrant doctors in, or arriving in Iceland in 2005. The data required for input to Mullan’s formula are the number of Icelandic doctors known to have emigrated over some period (Mullan’s A), and the number of doctors actually working in Iceland in 2005 (Mullan’s B), not the number of doctors immigrating into Iceland in 2005.

If A=318 and B=1060 then the emigration factor was 23 as the authors state, but the wording used is, in my opinion, possibly misleading or confusing. Similar comments apply to the emigration factor statement for 2012. I suggest the authors revise their wording of this section of the paper.

2.2 Minor essential revisions

2.2.1 In Table 1 the column heading "All doctors in Iceland" should be "All specialists in Iceland".

2.3 Discretionary Revisions:

2.3.1 I think the Methods section would be easier to read if the details of the “All-doctor s survey” were presented first and then the authors explain that for this paper they used only the data from the specialist respondents. (It would, I think, be a good idea to include in this paper the findings relating to the other,
non-specialist doctors and thus make it a comparative study – but the authors may have good reasons for not doing this.)

2.3.2 A chart or table showing emigration rates for specialists and non-specialists over a number of years would underline the statement "emigration of specialists has never been a problem".

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests