Reviewer's report

Title: A study of the number of physicians registered in Jamaica and their countries of training.

Version: 2 Date: 16 June 2008

Reviewer: Affette McCaw-Binns

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MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS
1. Abstract conclusion + conclusion (p12) -- conclusion states that "MCJ list SIGNIFICANTLY overestimates the number ...... while underestimating the number of specialists." My chi-squared test (2549,118; 139, 11) using EPIINFO was not statistically significant. Kindly omit SIGNIFICANTLY. Word used too lightly. If you want to use it -- would be more accurate a descriptor for the underestimate of specialists -- which is not the MCJs mandate anyway.

2. Page 5's reference to the "University College of the West Indies" mixes reference to the opening of the university in 1948 in Jamaica and its later expansion to 3 campuses including Barbados and Trinidad. Either omit the "college" or omit the reference to "Barbados and Trinidad" in this sentence.

3. The entire first paragraph on p5 needs to be better constructed and broken at least into 2 -- one talking at UWI and a second which focuses on the aims of the study. The purpose of the reference to whether students pay the full cost of their tuition is untidy and needs to be better stated.

4. Discussion -- how is the concept of "currently practicing" defined. How are registered physicians who have administrative duties but do not see patients defined? This needs to be clarified up front in your methods section. Check the intent of paragraph 2 of the discussion.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS
1. The physician to population ratio is not necessarily an indicator of health status but of access to health care. Kindly modify in both the abstract and text.

2. p7. Unclear what the significance of the reference to 1967 is regarding "primary site of basic training". If she is referring to Figure 2, it needs to be cited and may be more clearly stated as "...by 1967. more physicians practicing in Jamaica had been trained at the University of the West Indies..." and tie this together with the 3rd sentence.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS
1. As the data were for 2004, not 2001, she should use the mean population for 2004 as the denominator to calculate her physician to population rate.
2. Prof. Gray's name spelt incorrectly on p8.
3. There are still minor editorial corrections needed.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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