Reviewer's report

Title: Physician perception of doctor-patient relationships in emergency clinics: What roles do gender and ethnicity play?

Version: 3 Date: 12 November 2007

Reviewer: Richard M Frankel

Reviewer's report:

General The paper is much improved, however, two concerns remain. First, ethnicity alone is probably too crude a measure to reveal meaningful results. I have no doubt that communication problems between native speakers and those whose first language is not German will create communication problems that need to be addressed. It is likely that the challenge of these problems runs more along socioeconomic lines than it does simply by virtue of not having German as a mother tongue. Do you have any information about level of education or socioeconomic status? If so, how does this data relate to your findings. Secondly, I question the use of physician satisfaction as a measure. In patient populations satisfaction has had mixed results when analyzed in terms of outcomes of care. Is there any evidence in this study that lower physician satisfaction translates into lower quality of care? If not, while the issue of dealing with language differences is important it is not the main issue in terms of quality of care and quality of patient experience and outcomes. Again, I would challenge you to refer to the research literature and document the effect of lower physician satisfaction on processes and outcomes of care and to do the same for patients.

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

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

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'