Reviewer's report

Title: Managerial competencies of hospital managers in South Africa: A survey of managers in the public and private sectors

Version: 1 Date: 23 October 2007

Reviewer: Sheila S Barsel

Reviewer's report:

General

The question posed by the authors is clear and well-defined. The reviewer is unaware of previous research that may have been done in this field. The variables that have been used in the comparison do indicate a fresh approach to research of management competencies. There is some concern at the width of the variable/key function “delivery of health care” as it impacts on the interpretation of this key function.

There is some concern at the lack of definition of the term “delivery of health care”. This width of the term may create difficulty for the respondents in the self-assessment. In addition, the other variables – planning, leading, organising, controlling, legal, ethical and self management are seen to be the component competencies required for the “delivery of health care”. Therefore these would enable the manager to score high on that indicator. The reviewer is of the opinion that “delivery of health care” is in fact the objective rather than a competency.

Further this term may be confused with an area of clinical competence rather than a managerial competence.

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

The method (a single method is used) is sound. There is always a question mark when a one-dimensional approach is used. However, Pillay does indicate that he is surveying the managers and that he has chosen this methodology.

Pillay’s title indicates clearly what he sets out to prove in his research. However, the title does not indicate the findings. It is questionable whether it is essential that a title should convey the results – in the mind of the reviewer it is sufficient that is indicates clearly the area of research.

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 outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.