Reviewer's report

Title: The Current Shortage and Future Surplus of Doctors: A Simulation modelling of the Future Growth of the Japanese Medical Workforce

Version: 1 Date: 9 September 2010

Reviewer: keith masnick

Reviewer's report:

1. Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?
Yes. An interesting paper that could be more valuable with some small additions such as a discussion of the alternatives to increasing the numbers of doctors as the solution to imbalances in the HRH in Japan and barriers to entry to Japan for overseas medical practitioners.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?
Method section needs more detail. The selected methodology is a little basic in that it is a simple spreadsheet approach rather than something more sophisticated. As an example see http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/7/1/42 . In addition a better flow diagram is needed.

3. Are the data sound and well controlled?
Not applicable

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Not applicable

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Not completely-an expansion of this section would help clarify the discussion.

6. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
This may be semantic but this paper is more a pair of projections rather than a simulation. Not an important matter

7. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes with changes suggetsed in attached document

Please make your report as constructive and detailed as possible in your comments so that authors have the opportunity to overcome any serious deficiencies that you find and please also divide your comments into the following categories:

• Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Text changes as marked in the commented document.
The range of the paper is too limited. The authors might consider briefly putting
the medical workforce into a full health force setting. For example, the effects of
using allied health practitioners on the need for increased medical practitioners.
The authors need to put into perspective why they selected only 2 projections
and what might they suggest is an optimal response to the perceived problem.

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