Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of the Doppler Ultrasound identification ability of student and registered podiatrists

Version: 1  Date: 20 May 2013

Reviewer: Nichola McLarnon

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The manuscript will be of general interest to clinicians and educationalists alike. An interesting area of study which does not appear to be have been explored previously.

General comments:

Background: Within the background to the study it may be useful to provide further detail regarding the clinical relevance of the patterns of blood flow that clinicians/students have been asked to identify.

Is the question posed by the authors new and well defined?

Yes

Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to replicate the work?

Although the methods are appropriate and clearly outlined, further detail regarding the personnel involved in the collection/interpretation of the Doppler recordings (to be utilised within the study) would be beneficial. It is unclear at present who undertook the assessment of the initial recordings to be included within the study – given the focus on experience within the study with regard to interpretation.
It is unclear within the methods as to why some of the recordings were duplicated to give 15 recordings.

Are the data sound and well controlled?

Again given the focus on experience with regards to interpretation, it is unclear as to why 2nd and 3rd year students were grouped together as one student group – presumably with different levels of experience in Doppler Ultrasound interpretation?

Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes

Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Generally yes. Can the authors speculate as to why the results of this particular study are at odds to the findings of similar previous ones?

The other key question, although outside the scope of this study, relates to technique/competence in the use of Doppler ultrasound and the ability of the practitioner to elicit meaningful outputs (prior to interpretation).

Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

Yes – I would suggest, however, that this could be better phrased e.g. A Comparison of Doppler Ultrasound Interpretation by Student and Registered Podiatrists

Level of interest: An article of general 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

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