Author’s response to reviews

Title: A Qualitative Assessment of Practitioner Perspectives Post-Introduction of the First Continuous Professional Competence (CPC) Guidelines for Emergency Medical Technicians in Ireland.

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RATS guidelines

In accordance with BioMed Central editorial policies (http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/editorialpolicies#StandardsofReporting), could you please ensure your manuscript reporting adheres to RATS guidelines (http://www.biomedcentral.com/authors/rats) for reporting qualitative studies. This is so your methodology can be fully evaluated and utilised.

(R) Relevance of the Study question:

This study was conducted to assess the experience of Irish pre-hospital practitioners following the introduction of the first ever mandatory Continuous Professional Competence (CPC) guidelines by the national Regulator.

This is stated in the Abstract and Background

This is the first time National guidelines have been introduced in Ireland for registered pre-hospital practitioners and is based on our previous studies and findings published in BMC Emergency Medicine (Dec 2013). http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-227X/13/25

This study will impact the proposed new Continuous Professional Competence guidelines soon to be introduced for all other paramedics and advanced paramedics in the Country. It is the first national qualitative study involving EMTs and Continuous Professional Competence

(A) Appropriateness of qualitative method

A qualitative method was selected to allow for interaction with these groups and to add to our already published quantitative study. This ‘discussion’ methodology allowed for facilitated discussion on specific topics whereby participants were enabled to share and contribute to a wider discussion through a process of
guided facilitation.
This is stated in lines 120 -127.

(T) Transparency of Procedures
Participants selected were the most appropriate groups as they had experience, were the correct registrant group (EMTs) and there was nationwide representation with twenty counties out of twenty-six counties represented. This is included in lines 135-140

As the groups were only drawn from one organisation, this may be a weakness but this is included in the limitations section of the manuscript. (lines 368-369)

Ethics: Approval through the University and Hospital group was given (lines 129 -132) and participants gave written consent prior to the commencement of the study (lines 132-133)

(S) Soundness of Interpretive approach
The methodology and data analysis is described in lines 166 – 175
Quotations from participants are used throughout.
Limitations were considered and included lines 364-371.