Reviewer’s report

Title: TOWARDS DEVELOPING A CONSENSUS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL EMERGENCY MEDICINE FELLOWSHIPS

Version: 0 Date: 14 Jun 2019

Reviewer: Corey B. Bills

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to review this manuscript. Overall I think this article touches on an important element missing in our training of global EM trainees. Overall, I think the manuscript can be strengthened by expansion of the methods and results in line with aims purported in the introduction--with the hopes of a more logical discussion section stemming from the results provided.

Abstract:

Background: Please clarify--While I am in agreement that there are no agreed upon assessments, I think part of the problem is there is no agreed upon curriculum upon which to base one's assessment. At the same time there is literature supporting the use of milestones which seems to have some support (see: Douglass et al published in AET 2017)

Intro:

line 85-86: I'm curious how broad agreement was determined...especially since at present only 11 programs have established de novo assessment processes.

line 101-107. The aims of the manuscript are quite numerous and don't seem to follow in the methods and results section

Methods:

Overall, I feel like this could be further developed.

For example, after convening experts how was the scoping review completed; what were the components of the brief survey--what questions were asked; how was consensus on building a broader framework derived.
Results

line 132: Were there any other comments about what the structured tools looked like, what components were used. Why weren't the specific components of these formal assessment tools used to build a more formal approach as opposed to just using the IFEM approach. Please clarify.

line 135: why such brevity to the components of the scoping review, at the very least it might be nice to reference the larger frameworks out there so that we can more easily follow the logic of teh discussion.

Discussion

Overall I find the structure of the Discussion confusing and does not follow logically from the results. Rather than reference the survey results first with focus on existing use of formal assessments (of which 11 programs seemed to have them) the authors reference articles from the scoping review. Moreover none of those articles, were presented in the results section making it all the more confusing as to how these specific articles were chosen. Can you please clarify

Second, the subheadings are confusing and the structure of paragraphs followed by recommendations is not consistent.

Third, why the reliance on the IFEM assessment, unless I'm confused the IFEM 10 step assessment is a specialty assessment, and has not been validated or used for subspecialty use in global EM fellowships. If this is not the case then more detail as to it's use is warranted.

Again with reference to the three referenced assessment frameworks why not provide how these relate to those already in use by fellowship programs from the survey.

line 178: i find this subheading confusing and subsequent subheadings don't follow, the structure of paragraphs with recommendations i good but it's not clear that you are building toward consensus recommendations based on the actual results you provide.
line 197: This sentence is a little unclear to the reader. "The current "tick box" approach to assessment which focuses on task completion rather than attainment of competency does not adequately" Is the tick box approach in reference to other specialty EM programs, to subspecialty EM programs. I think most programs have graduated to milestones based on competencies rather than on task completion, but maybe some more background would help to clarify this point.

Second, the sentence of lack of a field assessment doesn't seem to logically derive from the lack of a competency based assessment paradigm. In other words they seem like two separate arguments and the second sentence on field based assessment should be moved to another section.

line 203: unclear if (1) is a reference.

line 213: period before citation

line 221: need punctuation

line 222: teh recommendation here seems to hew toward milestones if thats the case how does it differ from that by Douglass, et al? Please clarify

line 226: confused about this subheading and the lack of formal recommendation here...Do you want to include one to make this similar to previous sections. If not then why a new subheading?

line 227: Word choice "as previously outlined". Differences in programs aren't actually really outlined previously. You make mention of differences in focus, but not really in terms of time as this sentence seems to indicate.

line 309: Is there science or consensus to back up the timeliness with which trainees are reviewed? Why not place this in the recommendation and use the non italicised section to provide evidence leading to your recommendation.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No
Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?  
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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