**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Assessing Predictors of Intention to Prescribe Sick Leave Among Primary Care Physicians Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 26 May 2017

**Reviewer:** Mark Harris

**Reviewer's report:**

This is an interesting study of sickness certification intentions of primary care physicians in Malaysia.

The study instrument and analysis is based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The use of theory to inform such research is indeed appropriate (Cf Grol and Grimshaw Lancet 2003). However greater justification for the use of TPB needs to be provided in the introduction to this paper. Reference could be made to Jeremy Grimshaw's work in particular.

The description of the development of the questionnaire is good. Usually the process involves qualitative study to ensure that the questions are indeed interpreted as intended. If there was any qualitative work it would be useful to refer to this.

The analysis was appropriate. However the exploration of the relationship between theoretic constructs should have included some path analysis using multivariate or structural equation modelling. Figure three for example may be confounded by associations between the determinants of behavioural intentions (eg subjective norms may influence attitudes).

The response rate was very high for a questionnaire study of physicians. This and the possible reasons for this are worth commenting on in the discussion.

It would also be useful to make reference to the considerable amount of other research using TPB to understand physician practices.

The discussion could usefully explore the implications of the findings for policy and practice. For example the association with attitudes and subjective norms may have implications for programs and policies designed to improve sickness certification in primary care. For example it may mean that 'academic detailing' by a peer may be useful or that peer leaders may be useful.

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

Yes
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.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
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I am able to assess the statistics

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