Reviewer’s report

Title: Rwandan family medicine residents expanding their training in South Africa - the use of South-South electives in enhancing learning experiences

Version: 2 Date: 21 April 2015

Reviewer: David Ponka

Reviewer’s report:

This is an important study and timely addition to the literature on International Medicine Electives (IMEs). It has the potential to significantly add to the broadening discussion in the field.

However several issues are outstanding.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Even though South Africa is truly considered a developing country from the Global South, it has an established history of Family Medicine, as the authors themselves state. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore, in the discussion namely, whether the findings can be extrapolated to other South-South IMEs, between two countries without such an established tradition.

2. As it currently stands the discussion is too short and comes across as hastily written. It does not adequately revisit the literature to situate the study’s findings. An example of a point to explore in the discussion, as an example, is made above.

3. The quotes used to report the qualitative findings are most revealing and clearly carefully chosen, but they appear without introduction or explanation. In other words, they are "floating" in the text and need more of an anchor/elaboration.

4. The interviewer was also a clinical supervisor. Although the authors acknowledge that this was not ideal, we cannot go back and change that now. They assure us that they think reporting bias is nonetheless not significant. Can they find any evidence or literature to support this statement?

Minor Essential Revisions

The language/grammar in the manuscript needs careful editing. Some very select examples:

line 51: Only occasionally medical literature describes South-North electives. (should be "only occasional literature describes" or "only occasionally does literature describe")

LINE 76: Recently, authors have been discussing that North-South IME should
not only be for student-gaining, but also profit the hosting institutions/communities; mutual benefit (improper use of semi-colon. I do not believe that "student-gaining" is a term.)

Line 82: Several authors have since argued for reciprocity in IME; though hów has been a difficult question.

Finally, please consider not ending the introduction with line 56: "We urge Northern institutes to review their vision and actions for reciprocity when sending students to their Southern colleague institutes." This sounds more like a conclusion.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting piece.

I consent to this summary report being made open access.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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