Reviewer's report

Title: Cross-cultural perspectives on the patient-provider relationship: a qualitative study exploring reflections from Ghanaian medical students following a clinical rotation in the United States

Version: 2 Date: 13 June 2015

Reviewer: david paul

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Thank you for the opportunity to review the manuscript which provides an insight into the significant impact a short elective in a high resource setting can have for medical students from low resource settings. As such it begins to fill a gap in the literature which, in general, has focused on the experience of medical students from high resource areas having and immersion or elective in a low resource setting.

The manuscript would benefit from a number of additions or modifications as outlined below:

1. I appreciate that this is principally reporting on the impact of the elective on Ghanaian medical students, and represents one of the first reportages of students travelling from low to high resource settings. That said, this was a part of a bilateral exchange program and as such some detail of relative impact and numbers of students taking their elective in Ghana should be included for context.

2. There is a need to clarify further the issues that meant that it was difficult to get ‘adequate numbers of interviews within the original study cohort’ (line 122) and provide the numbers of the additional 29 students from the 2011 cohort who participated in the qualitative study. Further, the manuscript would be strengthened by clarifying the nature of the experience for this added group so readers would then be aware if they are commenting on the same or different experience – eg, duration of elective, location of elective, etc.

3. The interview questions should be included in the manuscript.

4. There is a high reliance on the quotes to speak for themselves in the second halve of the results section (see lines 203 - 279). A stronger presence of the authors voice in this section would be useful.

5. There is some repetition in the results and discussion section and consideration on combining these section should be considered.

- Minor Essential Revisions
6. Throughout the manuscript there is some diversity in the way that quotes from the interview transcripts are presented. In some places, for example lines 205, 286 and 301, there are long quotes included within paragraphs. It would be better for these to be presented consistently as with other long quotes, namely, as a separate indented paragraphs.

7. In places the authors assert the transformative nature of the elective experience being researched was tremendous (lines 354, 380). Whilst the study demonstrates a considerable impact on those students who participated in the qualitative interviews, a more contextual and measured expression could be considered. The authors note that the average time post elective was 17 months and that further research was needed to evaluate the persistence or otherwise of the transformative learning (line 359).

8. The presentation of the references in the reference list should conform to usual practice – appropriate capitalization of journal titles.

9. The conclusion is quite brief and the opportunity exists to consider what can be learnt from the elective experience that could be applied in the local setting to assist with local transformative learning with out the expense of a short term elective. For example, how might medical schools incorporate ways to support and sustain some of the shifts in values and attitudes the students gained from the elective within the local setting and curricula?

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests