Reviewer's report

Title: Factors affecting the choice of and predicting dissatisfaction with the medical profession

Version: 2
Date: 1 March 2015

Reviewer: Phillippa Poole

Reviewer's report:

Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Very interesting study – retrospective survey of three cohorts, each with a relatively big n. Aim is clear.

Discretionary Revisions
1. As you seem to be thinking about changing the selection process, are you aware of evidence between aptitude tests or interview and career choice/satisfaction?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?

Minor Essential Revisions
2. Please define more what is meant by VOCATION as a factor as this is not clear to me.
3. Was the original 1988 survey validated or based on any other work?

Are the data sound?
Seem to be. Large numbers (>4,700). Response rates > 50% although less in more recent survey in 2008.

Do the figures appear to be genuine, i.e. without evidence of manipulation?
Yes look fine.

Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Discretionary Revisions
4. Strengths include the size and that it is a national study, and looks at three time periods
5. To me, some of the most striking findings are the stability of choice over time, increasing satisfaction over time, and that salary or flexibility do not seem such a big motives - what is happening in terms of medical work practice in Finland (e.g
salaries, working hours, vacancy rates?) This context would aid generalisability.

Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

Minor Essential Revisions

6. Recall bias well discussed. More needs to be made of responder bias, and even survivor bias as those who answered are still in medical careers presumably.

7. Why lower response rate in 2008?

Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
• yes

Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

Minor Essential Revisions

8. The title is a bit clumsy – maybe something simpler such as Factors important in the choice of a medical career: a national study

9. You could put in more actual numbers and levels of statistical significance in to the abstract/ text.

Is the writing acceptable?

Minor Essential Revisions

10. Needs an English expert to correct minor phrasing, tense and grammar issues. There are some very long sentences including those with double negatives, which make it hard to follow

11. On page 14 line 18 and following, the use of 5% units seems to make no sense – please clarify.

12. Table 3: align the column headings better

13. Table 4: add to the legend that statistically significant differences are in BOLD

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