Reviewer’s report

Title: Resident Perceptions of the Impact of Duty Hour Restrictions on Resident-Attending interactions: An exploratory study

Version: 0 Date: 05 Oct 2016

Reviewer: Amy Prunuske

Reviewer's report:

In this study, the authors conducted focus group interviews with 40 residents from 5 departments including surgery, family practice, pediatrics, and internal medicine in two hospital systems to identify behaviors that are supportive or unsupportive of compliance with duty hour regulations. The manuscript is very well written but to meaningfully contribute to the literature in this area it would be helpful if the authors addressed the following suggestions.

1. The lit review could include more information about impact of duty hour restrictions on actual patient outcomes and resident well-being (N Engl J Med 2016; 374:713-727).

2. The general themes that were identified are consistent with the previous literature. I think at this point it would be more helpful to know which environments (i.e. community hospital vs university teaching hospital) are more conducive to compliance. It is unclear whether the focus groups were run in homogenous or heterogenous groups that could be separately coded. It does appear that the surveys were linked to particular residency program and I appreciate that the numbers are small but it would be interesting to know if there were any differences observed when comparing surgery and nonsurgery residencies for example. The authors also emphasize the important of formal structures in enforcing the restrictions so understanding how these very could be important.

3. It is also possible that the resident-attending relationship may be impacted by other factors like gender or race. Was this accounted for in any way? Even just a general reporting of demographics would be helpful. It would also be helpful to know whether the residents felt that these experiences occurred with the majority of attendings or just a subset.

4. The first two open ended survey questions seem leading in the negative direction. Impact of "work hour restrictions" comes across more negative than saying impact of "guideline
of working a maximum of 80 hours a week”. Statement 2 could have read what effect does duty hour restriction have on resident professionalism rather than leading with have the guidelines compromised resident professionalism? Even all of the survey questions about attending attitudes are primed to the negative.

5. In terms of quality improvement, was the data from the focus groups provided to the program directors? It would have been interesting to see if the same survey data from the attendings to see how in line the residents responses are with the attendings. There was the perceived concern they would get bad evaluations so it would be helpful to know whether this actually happened or at least whether it was perceived to would happen.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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