Author’s response to reviews

Title: Interprofessional Education in Graduate Medical Education: Survey Study of Residency Program Directors

Authors:

Morhaf Al Achkar (alachkar@iupui.edu)

Matthew Hanauer (mhanauer@umail.iu.edu)

Chantel colavecchia (ccolavec@iu.edu)

Dean Seehusen (DSEEHUSEN@msn.com)

Version: 1 Date: 21 Jul 2017

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for considering our paper for publication at your respected journal. The feedback the reviewers provided has helped us to significantly improve our paper. We truly appreciate all the comments given by the reviewers. We hope you find this current version to have addressed all your concern and suitable for publication.

Best regards,

The Authors

Reviewer reports:

Dario Cecilio Fernandes (Reviewer 1): Once more, I read this paper with great interest. Despite the authors' argumentation and some adjustments, a few points should be clarified and revised before publication.

We want to apologize if we appeared argumentative. We appreciate the feedback and we acknowledge that it helped enormously reshape our thinking in this project.
The goal of this paper was to identify characteristics of interprofessional education in the United States. This article consisted in describing these features based on a survey. The authors argue that descriptive studies are important and should be considered. Although this is true, it is not clear in the Introduction what the authors are trying to identify or describe. Based on the previous remarks of the reviewers, the authors should strengthen their introduction, leading to a clear aim or research question.

The other reviewer has commented that it might not be suitable to be published as a research paper. This was probably because of the lack of a clear aim. It is not clear why describing different interprofessional education programmes would be substantial from a research point of view.

We expanded our introduction. Specifically, we added a Cochrane review to support the argument that IPE is relevant and likely effective. We then clarified the significance of this work in terms of it being situated in GME and why it can be particularly relevant to resident training. We elaborated on the “so what?” by explicating the gap the paper comes to address and the findings’ potential impact. We also added a paragraph to address the specific concern of the added value of this work.

The Methods section is clearly written and well structured. However, now it is missing the data analysis section. The authors have decided to focus only on the descriptive statistics, which seems more adequate than before. I would like to recommend the authors to add the data analysis section.

The Results section is clearly written and well structured. I would like to recommend the authors to re-structure the article accordingly to their three goals. In that way, it would be easier to make the connections between their goals and the outcomes.
We restructured the results section in accordance with the three research questions.

It would also help the authors to focus their discussion on the main outcomes.

We re-wrote the discussion. Removed what can appear as over-generalization of findings. We hope the revised discussion addresses the concern.

Still, the other reviewer and I have concerns about the response rate. I am wondering whether their findings are representative of the United States or even of the programmes that have an interprofessional education. This would affect their discussion section, which is overstating their results.

This is a valid concern. We revised the wording of the meanings of the findings and limited the scope of application. See first paragraph in discussion and limitation.

In the Discussion section, some phrases overstated their results. For example, the first phrase "IPE is currently being used by over half of our survey participants from GME residency programs", it is not accurate, since their response rate was low.

We revised the statement to fit accurately the results.
Overall, the Discussion section needs to focus on their findings. The authors assume that their study is representative of IPE programmes but clearly is not, because of their response rate.

We revised the discussion part to focus on the main findings.

Also, there some paragraphs that should be moved to the results section. An example is "The top five reasons for implementing IPE are improving collaboration, communication, patient safety, teamwork, and efficiency. These concepts should be at the center when implementing future IPE activities".

We removed that part from the discussion. It is already covered in the results section. Very good point.

Another example is "Overall, there did not appear to be many statistically significant differences between the programs that had implemented IPE and the programs considering it regarding their characteristics, goals, and measured outcomes. These results are encouraging; it appears as though those interested in IPE have practical and feasible ideas for how to incorporate IPE into their programs." This paragraph is actually strange since the authors did not conduct any statistical analysis. This should be removed from the discussion.

We removed the related paragraph.

The authors raised important questions about the implementation of IPE, and they should discuss more this gap, which is very informative.
We elaborated on the implementation in the discussion. We specifically discussed the difference between the literature and the practice and between the contemplated experiences and the current ones.

Overall, the article needs a major revision of the English. Besides, there are many typos that the authors should revise as well. For example, the phrase "IPE is currently being used by over half of our survey participants from GME residency programs to our knowledge" has a dot between words.

If improvements to the English language within your manuscript have been requested, you should have your manuscript reviewed by someone who is fluent in English. If you would like professional help in revising this manuscript, you can use any reputable English language editing service. We can recommend our affiliates Nature Research Editing Service (http://bit.ly/NRES_BS) and American Journal Experts (http://bit.ly/AJE_BS) for help with English usage. Please note that use of an editing service is neither a requirement nor a guarantee of publication. Free assistance is available from our English language tutorial (https://www.springer.com/gb/authors-editors/authorandreviewertutorials/writinginenglish) and our Writing resources (http://www.biomedcentral.com/getpublished/writing-resources). These cover common mistakes that occur when writing in English.

We had an English editor look at the draft and make changes. We also spent time looking again at the errors and typos. We used Scribendi editors and they edited and proofed the English.