Reviewer’s report

Title: Revitalizing physical assessment in undergraduate nursing education - what skills are important to learn, and how are these skills applied during clinical rotation? A cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 26 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Melanie Birks

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript is much improved, thank you.

- Some editing is still required throughout for grammar and spelling (note that curriculum is singular, curricula is plural)

- Formatting also needs attention, for example, consistency in separation of paragraphs

- There is a heavy reliance on sentences beginning with 'This...'. It would be best to qualify what is being discussed (e.g. 'This situation..' 'This finding..' etc.)

- Additional headings have been added throughout the Method section which fragment the discussion, I suggest reviewing these. Sub-headings under 'data analysis' for example are not needed

- There is no explanation as to where the question and potential answers came from to assess barriers and facilitating factors discussed on page 6 - are these evidence based?

- I suggested in the first review that the reader be reminded of the scale in the results section (page 8); the scale (e.g. 1-6) need only be mentioned, rather than repeating the passage from the Method section
- The new section containing the focus group themes could be better presented (e.g. long quotes indented as per convention). The headings are not helpful here. I suggest simply using 'Survey findings' and 'Focus group findings' or similar.

- There appear to be a number of new sections that are not highlighted - for example the last sentence in the first paragraph under 'Discussion' cites my earlier work as arguing for reducing the number of skills. The argument is referred to in this paper, but the paper itself does not argue for a reduction of skills to be taught.

This is an interesting piece of work that will be strengthened by these minor revisions.

**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.

I recommend additional statistical review

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