Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Does regulation increase the rate at which doctors leave practice? Analysis of routine hospital data in the English NHS following the introduction of medical revalidation

**Version:** 0 **Date:** 19 Aug 2018

**Reviewer:** Mary Rimsza

**Reviewer's report:**

This manuscript regarding the impact of revalidation on physician retirement is well-written. There are limitations to the study and most of these are outlined in the discussion. Use of mortality data post discharge is a crude and imprecise measure of quality of care and attributing the mortality to the first consultant is problematic since the duration of care by this consultant is not assessed. Would it be more accurate to assign the mortality to the last consultant who might have been most responsible for the decision to discharge, or the consultant who cared for the patient for the longest period of time during the hospitalization?

The authors conclude that revalidation leads to DOCTORS ceasing clinical practice, but this analysis is limited to hospital-based consultants only. This might be noted as a limitation of the study and the conclusion reworded to reflect that these findings are limited to doctors who work as hospital consultants.

The conclusion should include the measure of quality used in the analysis since this is a major limitation.

The authors do not address in the discussion the higher risk of exit for surgeons; this is a very interesting finding and it would be of interest to readers for the authors to discuss the possible reasons for this difference (e.g. are their differences in the revalidation process for surgical vs medical consultants which might explain this? are surgeons more likely to be financially able to exit?)

In the section which is title "What this study adds" the authors refer to revalidation as a "scheme", this suggests they are biased against revalidation, suggest a more neutral term be used.

**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?  
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