Author's response to reviews

Title: A scoping review of the association between rural medical education and rural practice location

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Version: 3 Date: 23 March 2015

Author's response to reviews: see over
Author’s response to reviewers

Title: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RURAL MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RURAL PRACTICE LOCATION

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Version: 3 Date: 18 March 2015

Thank you for consideration of our manuscript for publication in your journal. We have revised the manuscript according to your reviewer’s comments

Reviewer's report – Review #1

Title: What is known about an association between rural medical education and rural practice location: a scoping review
Reviewer: Roger Strasser

Reviewer's report:
Thank you for the opportunity to review this revised manuscript. I am satisfied that the authors have addressed the issues and concerns raised by all reviewers including myself.

Review #1 has no suggested changes for the manuscript

In my view, this paper is ready for publication.
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable
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.

Reviewer's report - Review #2

Title: What is known about an association between rural medical education and rural practice location: a scoping review
Version: 2 Date: 26 February 2015
Reviewer: Maria Mathews

Reviewer's report:
- Major Compulsory Revisions
1. My concerns about the search strategy linger. If google scholar searches cannot be replicated why do this step first (and not last)? 7 (19%) of the 37 article included in the review were not identified through the computerized search strategy but through a review of the references of selected papers. I wonder whether additional papers would have been identified had the authors reviewed the references at an earlier stage in the inclusion/exclusion process.

As stated in the manuscript, the purpose of a Google Scholar search is to show ‘the likely extent of findings and relevance of terms selected, and helped to refine inclusion and exclusion criteria’. This approach is consistent with the scoping review method of Arksey and O’Malley. As part of the full text reading all article reference lists were scrutinised to ensure that no papers were missed. We have added a statement to the manuscript confirming that this occurred.

2. It is unclear what was abstracted and what was not. It the tables summarizing each study, some entries refer to amount of time at a location, or other detail, but others do not. If a detail is not mentioned, does that mean the study itself did not address the issue, or that the authors did not include it in the table?

We have added the following statement to the manuscript. In charting the data we were focused on consistent reporting. All available detail is included in table 4-8. Where detail is missing, the issue was not addressed in the study reviewed.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
Quality of written English :Acceptable
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

Reviewer's report - Review #3

Title: What is known about an association between rural medical education and rural practice location: a scoping review
Version: 2Date:27 February 2015
Reviewer:Tarun Sen Gupta
Reviewer's report:
I note the authors' thoughtful responses to the reviewers' comments, and believe they have addressed the concerns raised. I have just 2 points to raise further:

(Discretionary Revisions)

1. Northern Territory program (p8) should strictly be the Northern Territory Medical Program (ie NTMP)

**On page 8 this has been corrected to read Northern Territory Medical Program**

2. The title of the paper has also been amended in response to feedback, but I wonder if the message has been weakened more than was intended? What about something like: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RURAL MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RURAL PRACTICE LOCATION? I don't feel strongly about this, but offer this thought for the authors and editors to consider

We appreciate your suggestion and feel that it aptly describes the content of the article. The title has been amended.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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