Reviewer's report

Title: Feminisation of the medical workforce in low-income settings; findings from surveys in three African capital cities

Version: 3 Date: 27 June 2015

Reviewer: William B Weeks

Reviewer's report:

The paper is much improved. Thanks to the authors for being so responsive.

I have two minor 'compulsory' revisions. They are compulsory because, without them, I do not believe readers will be able to understand or interpret findings.

1. The authors need to define 'dual practice' used in the first sentence of section 2.1. I have no idea what that means. Alternatively, leave that term out and simply describe the purpose of the survey from which the data were collected (i.e., to understand physician practice patterns? To understand the current physician workforce?). For me, 'dual practice' has no meaning (or, perhaps, a plethora of them).

2. While I appreciate the authors changed their model to have 5 year increments, it's not clear either how the model was changed or what the coefficient means. For instance, what does a 'five-year increases variable' mean? For the former, just provide an example. Did the authors assign years worked to five year increments and then use those increments as a variable (what type of variable? dummy, as recommended, or continuous?) For the latter, provide a narrative example. does it mean that, with an additional five years of training, the hours worked goes down by 0.02? And if so, what does 0.02 mean? Given the intercept of 4 when overall work hours of about 50 (I am assuming here that table three refers to weekly hours, but that should be clarified in the table) i cannot imagine that 0.02 means weekly work hours....And the decrease simply makes me more confident that a dummy variable should be used - it is clearly not a linear relationship throughout the lifetime. In section 4.3 this needs to be clarified (as do the meanings of all of the coefficients....what does 'a decrease of 0.078' mean in the context of an intercept of about 4? sure, it's statistically significant, but what does it mean? An alternative to this would be to eliminate table 3, which i find confusing, and simply report on the findings in text form.

Finally, two minor points:

In table 1, the correct abbreviation is 133rd (just say the term). 133th is incorrect.
In table 3, use <0.001 instead of the long term used for p-value for the constant/intercept.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**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