Reviewer’s report

Title: The podiatric surgery theatre environment in the UK; is it conducive to learning? A quantitative study using the Surgical Theatre Educational Environment Measure (STEEM)

Version: 0 Date: 19 Jun 2018

Reviewer: Andy Bridgen

Reviewer's report:

The background could be improved by reference to Borthwick's work on podiatric surgery and Nancarrow & Borthwick's work on professional boundaries. At present the background contains some generalisations that should be reworded or referenced better as it suggests a lack of critical analysis which lead to more questions than answers. Why would a new course need to monitored if it met the SET's of the HCPC? There is a lot of evidence from medical, AHP and nursing training, through placements, that training can occur in a variety of settings. Why is a surgical unit any different? 'Standards published by the HCPC require demonstration of a number of specific statements (Table 1)' Where is the reference for this? It is not clear what the section on PASCOM has to say about training. What is unique about theatre as a learning environment? There are other environments that provide quality uninterrupted time

Methods section is sound.

Results section could be better presented particularly the most highly rated and lowest rated statements could be presented in a table with their median score.

Discussion section also lacks the critical analysis of the background. What are the flaws in your recruitment and how might this have affected you results? Doesn't the Fnais et al study suggest that STEEM may not give a true reflection about harassment. Why is that? Therefore why should STEEM be used as evidence to meet HCPC standards when other tools may be better? Why does the study being contemporary give it an advantage?

Overall though an interesting article that shows a surgical unit can be a safe and supportive learning environment.
Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

No, I work at an institution that is preparing to validate a course that will meet HCPC requirements for a podiatrist practising podiatric surgery. So my institution may gain financially from this publication.

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