

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Maintenance of Professional Competence in Ireland: A National Survey of Doctors' Attitudes and Experiences
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Galvin, Emer; Wiese, Anel; Dahly, Darren; O'Farrell, Janet; Cotter, Jantze; Bennett, Deirdre

### VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	David Cunningham NHS Education for Scotland Scotland
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	12-Oct-2020

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	I thought this was a very relevant piece of work relating to "mandatory" CPD activity. There are several countries in Europe who will be interested in the results. The method of developing the questionnaire was clear and a high response rate was achieved for research studies of this kind. The discussion and conclusions flowed from the results section well and the authors had carefully considered strengths and weaknesses of their research.
-------------------------	--

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Dr Lorelei Jones School of Health Sciences Bangor University
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	19-Oct-2020

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Thank you for the invitation to review this paper on doctors' views and experiences of complying with national requirements for maintaining professional competence (MPC). Reasons for not engaging with MPC include the time commitment and expense which are particular challenges for those working less than full-time, in locum or non-clinical roles, and taking maternity or sick leave. Suggestions for improvement include providing more information and support for the process, educational programmes with greater relevance to practice, improved accessibility (e.g. including online options), and greater flexibility and more varied ways of meeting the requirements.</p> <p>The research has a sound rationale and will be of interest to readers of this journal. The paper reports from a whole population survey with a higher than average response rate for this type of research (42%). The process used to develop the questionnaire is robust, including a literature review, a focus group, and an explicit theoretical framework. The survey was also piloted. The procedure, including public and patient involvement, has been clearly described.</p> <p>I am unable to comment on the use of statistical tests as I am primarily a qualitative researcher.</p>
-------------------------	--

	<p>The findings are interesting and likely to be useful for developing and improving processes for maintaining professional competence and CPD programmes more generally.</p> <p>The paper is easy to read and has been written to a high standard. I only have a few minor comments.</p> <p>Minor comments: In this context I think the response rate of 41.5% could be rounded up to 42%.</p> <p>Check the formatting guidelines - tables usually have the heading at the top (figures at the bottom).</p> <p>Why are there numbers before the text in the first column of tables? 'e.g 2.2 Remove or change audit'</p> <p>I suggest 'men' rather than 'male doctors'</p>
--	---

### VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

1. Reviewer comment: In this context I think the response rate of 41.5% could be rounded up to 42%.

Author response: We have made this change in the abstract but have kept the single decimal place in the results section in keeping with the other percentages reported.

2. Reviewer comment: Check the formatting guidelines - tables usually have the heading at the top (figures at the bottom).

Author response: We have moved the legends for the table to the top.

3. Reviewer comment: Why are there numbers before the text in the first column of tables? 'e.g 2.2 Remove or change audit'

Author response: We have removed the numbers from the tables.

4. Reviewer comment: I suggest 'men' rather than 'male doctors'

Author response: We have changed male doctors to men throughout.