

Table 1Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative studies (COREQ): 32-item checklist¹

No	Item	Guide questions/description
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity		
Personal Characteristics		
1.	Interviewer/facilitator	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group? <input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups were conducted by paid, non-faculty facilitators.
2.	Credentials	What were the researcher's credentials? <i>E.g. PhD, MD</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Kiersten Pianosi BSc <input type="checkbox"/> Cheri Bethune, MD <input type="checkbox"/> Katrina Hurley MD, MHI
3.	Occupation	What was their occupation at the time of the study? <input type="checkbox"/> Kiersten Pianosi, medical student year 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Cheri Bethune, Family Physician, Professor <input type="checkbox"/> Katrina Hurley, Emergency Physician, Assistant Professor
4.	Gender	Was the researcher male or female? <input type="checkbox"/> The researchers are female

¹Bethune C, Hansen PA, Deacon D, Hurley K, Kirby A, Godwin M. Family medicine as a career option: how students' attitudes changed during medical school. *Can Fam Physician*. 2007 May;53(5):881–5, 880.

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5.	Experience and training	<p>What experience or training did the researcher have?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kiersten Pianosi is a medical student with one prior publication using a mixed-methods approach; informal training on qualitative analysis and grounded theory was provided by the principal investigator prior to initiating data analysis for this study. ○ Cheri Bethune is a family physician with multiple publications. ○ Katrina Hurley has an MHI. She has one publication and a masters thesis that use qualitative methods, specifically grounded theory.
Relationship with participants		
6.	Relationship established	<p>Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The focus group transcripts were de-identified prior to analysis. In a small medical school, some familiarity between Dr. Bethune and the students could be expected - hence the need for a non-faculty facilitator and de-identified transcripts. Dr. Hurley would have known students in the cohort from 2002 but not in the 2006-2008 cohorts. K. Pianosi did not know any of the study participants.
7.	Participant knowledge of the interviewer	<p>What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. <i>personal goals, reasons for doing the research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The participants knew that the purpose of the focus groups were to assess what factors influenced their medical specialty career choices and how their undergraduate schooling prepared them to do so. ○ The participants did not know the focus group facilitators.
8.	Interviewer characteristics	<p>What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. <i>Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Part of the motivation for the study was to investigate the trend away from family medicine. One of the focus group questions specifically asked students to consider reasons why students have moved away from general medicine and how prepared they felt to make career choice decisions. So students could likely infer some of the underlying motivations of the researchers.

No	Item	Guide questions/description
Domain 2: study design		
Theoretical framework		
9.	Methodological orientation and Theory	<p>What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? <i>e.g. grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Grounded theory guided the qualitative analysis</p>
Participant selection		
10.	Sampling	<p>How were participants selected? <i>e.g. purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Purposive sampling: medical students were approached to participate in focus groups in the final year of their medical schooling</p>
11.	Method of approach	<p>How were participants approached? <i>e.g. face-to-face, telephone, mail, email</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> The class was approached as a whole to describe the focus group and identify it as part of the longitudinal survey in which they had participated. Sign up sheets and consent forms were available.</p>
12.	Sample size	<p>How many participants were in the study?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 70 participants in 16 focus groups.</p>
13.	Non-participation	<p>How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> We didn't track non-responders or non-participants.</p>
Setting		

No	Item	Guide questions/description
14.	Setting of data collection	<p>Where was the data collected? e.g. <i>home, clinic, workplace</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Focus groups occurred at a classroom/conference room at Memorial University in St. John's, NL (the medical school that the participants attended)</p>
15.	Presence of non-participants	<p>Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The participants and the non-faculty facilitator were the only individuals present at the focus groups.</p>
16.	Description of sample	<p>What are the important characteristics of the sample? e.g. <i>demographic data, date</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Graduating medical students at Memorial University of Newfoundland in the classes of 2002 and 2006-2008</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Male and female participants</p>
Data collection		
17.	Interview guide	<p>Were questions, prompts, guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A semi-structured guide was used to facilitate the focus groups. The questions and prompts were informed based on factors identified in the longitudinal survey.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> It was pilot tested with a cohort of students from a different class.</p>
18.	Repeat interviews	<p>Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No, each participant only completed one focus group.</p>
19.	Audio/visual recording	<p>Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The focus groups were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed and de-identified</p>
20.	Field notes	<p>Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The non-faculty facilitator did not take field notes during the focus groups.</p>

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21.	Duration	What was the duration of the interviews or focus group? <input type="radio"/> The focus groups were 35-90 minutes.
22.	Data saturation	Was data saturation discussed? <input type="radio"/> The focus groups were executed as scheduled and ongoing participation was not based on iterative data analysis. No new themes were identified after focus group 3 in 2007. There were 3 subsequent focus groups so the data were saturated.
23.	Transcripts returned	Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction? <input type="radio"/> Participants did not receive copies of the transcribed and de-identified focus groups.
Domain 3: analysis and findings		
Data analysis		
24.	Number of data coders	How many data coders coded the data? <input type="radio"/> Two researchers, Dr. Katrina Hurley and Kiersten Pianosi, coded the data
25.	Description of the coding tree	Did authors provide a description of the coding tree? <input type="radio"/> The two researchers independently reviewed the transcripts several times and coded them based on recurring topics/themes that arose in the students' discussions; this allowed the authors to compare and contrast themes arising from different groups and explore incongruous ideas. Together, they met to ensure consistency and compare relationships amongst the themes. <input type="radio"/> Major, intermediate and minor themes are listed in Table 1 of the paper.
26.	Derivation of themes	Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data? <input type="radio"/> Themes were derived from the data, based on recurring topics/themes in the students' discussions.

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27.	Software	<p>What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The coding was done systematically by hand in conjunction with Excel spreadsheets to manage coding categories and track sentinel quotes.</p>
28.	Participant checking	<p>Did participants provide feedback on the findings?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Participants were de-identified in the transcripts and not asked to review the findings of the qualitative analysis.</p>
Reporting		
29.	Quotations presented	<p>Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes / findings? Was each quotation identified? e.g. <i>participant number</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sentinel quotes were tracked using Excel spreadsheets and used to illustrate the recurring themes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> They were identified in the manuscript by cohort and focus group number, e.g. 2008, Focus Group 1</p>
30.	Data and findings consistent	<p>Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> There was consistency between the data and the 20 recurring themes identified</p>
31.	Clarity of major themes	<p>Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The major themes were identified separately in the results section using a table of sentinel quotes</p>
32.	Clarity of minor themes	<p>Is there a description of diverse cases or discussion of minor themes?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Minor themes were also identified in the results section, and were classified as those topics/themes that recurred but <i>not</i> consistently.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Intermediate themes were those that occurred consistently but not as frequently as the major themes.</p>