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Christopher R. Carpenter
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Cathy C. Sarli
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Susan A. Fowler
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Kulamakan Kulasegaram
McMaster University School of Medicine

Pierre Lapaine
McMaster University School of Medicine

See next page for additional authors

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Authors
Christopher R. Carpenter, Cathy C. Sarli, Susan A. Fowler, Kulamakan Kulasegaram, Pierre Lapaine, and Grant Schalet
Validation of the BEEM Rater Scale: An Instrument to Define the “Best Evidence for Emergency Medicine”

Christopher Carpenter MD MSc,1 Cathy Sarli MLS AHIP,1 Susan Fowler MLIS,1 Kulamakan Kulasegaram BHSc,2 Pierre Lapaine BSc,1 Grant Schalet,1 Andrew Worster, MD MSc3

1Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine 2McMaster University Department of Emergency Medicine, 3McMaster University Department of Epidemiology, 3McMaster University Division of Emergency Medicine

BACKGROUND
• Emergency physicians are challenged trying to stay current with simultaneously clinically relevant and valid studies.
• The BEEM Rater scale (Table 1) is a highly reliable single-question instrument for emergency physicians to rate emergency medicine (EM) clinical relevance of publications
• No gold standard for “clinical relevance” exists

OBJECTIVE
• To identify a bibliometric-based construct of EM clinical relevance upon which to correlate and indirectly validate the BEEM Rater scale

METHODS
• Title, conclusion, and PUBMED link for 605 studies relevant to EM and published between 2007 and 2012 were electronically distributed to a volunteer group of 200 practicing EM physicians around the world in samplings of 15-20 articles per month
• Physician volunteers rated the articles using Best Evidence in Emergency Medicine Rater scale
• Research staff independently abstracted bibliometric indices (Table 2) for each of the 605 studies and inter-rater agreement reported with correlation between BEEM rater scores and citation rate

RESULTS
• Citation rate correlated positively with BEEM Rater score (0.144), but the BEEM Rater score had minimal correlation with the JCR impact factor score (0.053)
• BEEM Rater score predicted Web of Science citation rate with Odds Ratio 1.24 (95% CI 1.11-1.40, p<0.0001)

CONCLUSION
• The BEEM Rater score correlates with future citations
• Future research should assess this instrument against alternative constructs of “best evidence”