Reviewer's report

Title: Quality of family history collection with use of a patient facing family history collection tool.

Version: 1  Date: 6 January 2014

Reviewer: Kevin Sweet

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Minor Essential Revisions:

This manuscript extends previous work using the Family Health History collection tool, MeTree in the primary care setting from these investigators. The purpose is to assess the quality of the FHH collected, with comparison to that collected by primary care providers by use of this tool, and to assess whether an educational intervention of patient participants increases the quality of the data provided.

The authors might consider adding the term “assessment” into the Title and throughout the manuscript, as the MeTree tool does more than just “collect” family health history.

Is there a copyright on the MeTree program? If so, this should be acknowledged when using this term through the manuscript.

It is unclear in the Methods section if the patient participant completed a paper worksheet with their family history information, which the investigators then entered into MeTree to generate a pedigree, or if the patient used the MeTree program to enter their family history information – what is the purpose of the worksheet? This should be clarified, and if there was no patient self use of the program, reasons provided as to why.

As there is mention and discussion of the patient educational intervention, and how this impacted their findings, it would be helpful to learn more about what information was provided in the patient brochures – how these materials were designed, etc. Also, does the MeTree program provide guidance to the user as to definitions on the 48 diseases that can be collected? Also, if the user has a family member with more than one cancer type, is there information as to primary versus secondary cancers, etc.

Terms such as FDR and SDR should be defined prior to use in the Discussion section as the general reader may not be familiar with these acronyms.

Page 9: the Section on “Perceptions of FHH Knowledge” needs some work. Seems a sentence or two is either incomplete or missing?

Further define what specific hereditary cancer syndromes are analyzed by the MeTree algorithms as the percentage of 0.21% (page 14) seems quite low, and further discussion may be necessary.
Define PCPs – be consistent with use of either PCPs or the term “physician” throughout.

In the Discussion section there is mention of “the amount of data and the quality of the data were sufficient to perform risk stratification on the vast majority of patients…”. Please further define “risk stratification” in the context of this study.

Check punctuation throughout. For example, p. 12, second paragraph there is a period missing after “no data relatives. Parentheses missing on p. 9, extra spaces btw words, etc

For Table 1, what is this asterisk text associated with: * previously published: Orlando LA, Hauser ER, Christianson C, et al. Protocol for implementation of family health history collection and decision support into primary care using a computerized family health history system. BMC health services research. 2011;11:264.

**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