Author's response to reviews

Title: Diffusion of an e-learning programme among Danish General Practitioners: A nation-wide prospective survey

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Version: 3 Date: 3 February 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Reviewer's report (I)

Title: Diffusion of an e-learning programme among Danish General Practitioners: A nation-wide prospective survey

Version: 2 Date: 27 December 2007

Reviewer: Shaun Treweek

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors have addressed my comments in the new version of their paper although I still have a few small comments. These are listed below under the headings used by Biomed Central.

Major Compulsory Revisions
None.

Minor Essential Revisions

Background
Page 3, third paragraph: The introduction of “Diffusion of Innovations” comes very suddenly, which makes it hard to see why the authors mention it. It is good to raise this here but I think there should be at least one sentence that makes it easier for the reader to see why the authors bring it up.

We have added this sentence before introducing Diffusion of Innovation.

“We were unable to identify studies that have considered the diffusion of an e-learning programme among general practitioners.”

Methods
Page 4, Guideline and the e-learning programme: “..using slides with speak..” should be “..using slides with audio..”

Changed.

Page 5, Internet based pop up questionnaires: The authors talk about two questionnaires before actually saying that there were two. I think the authors should start the third sentence in this section “There were two questionnaires both of which were tested for face validity..” “..letting five GPs filled..” should be “..letting five GPs fill..” “..should be completed at subsequent logons..” should be “..should be completed at all subsequent logons.

Changed as suggested.

Results
Page 7, “about the e-learning programme from one sources, whereas the remaining (24) had gained information from two or more different source.” should be “about the e-learning programme from one SOURCE, whereas the remaining (24) had gained information from two or more different SOURCES.”
Discussion
Page 9, first paragraph. The last sentence should be reworded along the lines of
**The ELP may not have managed to consider all these barriers.**

We have added a sentence regarding barriers in the first paragraph.

Discretionary Revisions
None

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**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

**Reviewer's report (II)**

**Title:** Diffusion of an e-learning programme among Danish General Practitioners: A nation-wide prospective survey

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 8 January 2008

**Reviewer:** Vernon Curran

**Reviewer's report:**
Minor Essential Revisions
A number of grammatical errors exist throughout the paper which makes it difficult to interpret the point which the authors are attempting to communicate. The paper would need to be reviewed and the grammar corrected.

We have had the paper reviewed by two reviewers in order to improve the grammar.

What are the main implications of the study results?
This is already described in the conclusion section." This result underscores the need for the development of tailored implementation strategies even when considering electronic formats of CME."

What aspects of your strategies to promote this e-learning program did not work as you had hoped?
As described in the conclusion section “When planning and developing electronic formats of CME, the fairly passively dissemination used to promote this e-learning programme did not induce a high uptake.”

What other strategies to promote and increase uptake of e-learning programs amongst physicians might you suggest?

Please refer to the main implication of this study

What are the limitations of the study?
We have already dedicated a paragraph to limitations

“Previous studies have only considered targeted strongly motivated groups of professionals [16-22] or internet traffic at a web site [23]. In accordance with other studies, we used log-files from the ELP software provider as an outcome measure [21]. However, this outcome measure does not evaluate the actual learning progress of the individual physician using the ELP. In our study, we had the advantage of having the possibility to identify users by some basic characteristics due to the possibility of identifying the participants by a unique log-on code and a subsequent merging of the log files with the DMA member database. To secure anonymity for the GPs we received data with a newly constructed participation code, which did not allow us to identify individual GPs. Thus, we do not have any ethical concerns regarding this study. However, we could have increased knowledge about non-users by mailing a questionnaire to a random sample of non-users. We did not consider this, because of the constructed participant code, which did not allow us to identify the individual GP.”

What are areas for future research?
As stated in another paragraph

“Even though e-learning may be as effective in increasing participant knowledge as traditional formats [4-6] this nation-wide survey demonstrates the need for an planned implementation
strategy. It is not clear whether e-learning represent specific problems compared to other CME activities. Some barriers have been identified: requirement for change; costs; poorly designed packages; inadequate technology; lack of skills; need for a component of face-to-face teaching; time intensive nature of e-learning; computer anxiety [15]. These aspects require further research.”

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
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'