Reviewer’s report

Title: What are the roles involved in establishing and maintaining informational continuity of care within family practice? A systematic review

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Reviewer: Marjan Kljakovic

Reviewer’s report:

I was overjoyed in reviewing Crooks & Agarwal’s systematic review titled “What are the roles involved in establishing and maintaining informational continuity of care within family practice? A systematic review” because their work addresses a neglected area of research in family practice.

A key finding was that none of the reviewed articles focused explicitly on the roles involved in establishing or maintaining informational continuity of care within family practice. More importantly, Crooks & Agarwal were able to extract from the literature the roles played by doctors, patients, and technology in keeping information continuous within family practice.

Crooks & Agarwal used the correct method for extracting research articles from the black literature. However, they might have tried to extract information from the grey literature – namely contact the key researchers found in their reviews, and contact various family practice / general practice / primary care organisations around the world that may have reports or raw data on informational continuity.

Crooks & Agarwal did not define what they meant by “information”. For example in Table 3 the following expressions were used –all referring to “information”:

- patient histories
- record keeping system(s)
- personal/social information
- information gets shared
- transferring information
- important information
- historical/contextual information

The problem is that the whole area is so new that there is no real discourse on what constitutes “the definition of information”. I prefer to define information according to Information Theory developed by Shannon et al in 1940’s – namely “information arises when a signal sent by a source reduces uncertainty in a receiver”. I suggest Crooks & Agarwal should at least stipulate what they take information to mean and point out that we need more research to create a definition that works for us all.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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