Reviewer's report

Title: epiPATH: an information system for the storage and management of molecular epidemiology data from infectious pathogens

Version: 2 Date: 5 March 2007

Reviewer: Jeremy Wyatt

Reviewer's report:

In favour of publication:
Good literature review and references
Well written nice diagrams
System is well documented - authors not holding back technical detail - and is available freely
System appears to have adequate security arrangements
System is non trivial - in fact is quite complex (eg. 50 database tables), reflects a lot of work

Against publication:
Probably not an original contribution to knowledge (but likely to be useful ideas & / or software for some other research groups)
Usability section is thin - describes why system should be usable rather than results of a small usability study. This would only need 5-6 target users following some scripts to try to make the tool support some typical tasks and require simple success rate / timing / user views measurements - see Neilson www.useit.com for how to do such studies + justification of why a sample of 5-6 is perfectly adequate
I was unclear how the tool links in to local lab systems, and how easy it would be for others to make such links - but maybe I read paper too quickly.
I missed some sample screen shots that would give potential users an idea of the kind of tasks it can support.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests