Reviewer’s report

Title: CDKD: A Clinical Database of Kidney Diseases

Version: 2 Date: 4 February 2012

Reviewer: Stephen Fadem

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Major essential revisions

1. Is the database new, or, if not, has it significantly evolved since its most recent description in the literature?

I am not familiar with this database. The database concept for storing patient data is not new, and has been evolving. I am not sure if one can track details of an individual patient’s course with this program, nor if you can track data from year to year. Please describe fully how this program evolved.

2. Does the manuscript adequately describe the importance and relevance of the database?

Yes, but it is not clear whether the chief intent is as a physician tool, a patient tool or a registry tool. If it is to be used by physicians, there must be a way to electronically and automatically handle laboratory data, and unless it is to be used as a personal patient database, there must be a means of data validation.

If the patient uses it, are the labs that are entered by the physician viewable by the patient. This is the concept of the patient portal used is every CCHIT certified EHR.

If the records are added independently, is there a way to view normalize data such as labs, history, physical findings, assessment, associated problems and laboratory or imaging data.

Please elaborate.

3. Is the user interface easy to interact with?

No. I could not create a user name or password. The program in demo mode should have a variety of test patients that I can readily see.

Please create a demo mode that is more functional

4. Does the manuscript adequately describe how the database is constructed, the data sources and quality control?

Fair. There are no details about the encryption algorithm. It is not clear how personal health information is stored. It is not mentioned whether or not there a data recovery function for entries not yet backed up?
Please add these comments

5. Does the manuscript adequately describe the user interface, and how it fulfils its intended uses?

Fair. There is no explanation of how experimental results are validated, and this is necessary if the program is used for research.

Please elaborate

6. Is the database readily accessible, and its constituent data attributed to a source?

The database is on the web. It is easily accessible. I tried to register and it would not let me. The demo function needs to be developed more fully. I would suggest having a true web version that is only for registered users, contains only validated data, and is encrypted. Then, I would have a demo version that has fictitious data or uses deidentification software like Informatica.

Please create a demo version

7. Is the database free to academic users (note that we are not willing to publish database descriptions unless it is)? And is the availability of the database and any restrictions on use clearly stated in the manuscript?

Yes

8. Are the discussion and conclusions of the manuscript well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

Yes

9. Do the title and abstract of the manuscript accurately convey what has been found?

Yes

10. Is the writing acceptable?

Fair. There are some typographical errors and syntax mistakes.

11. Comment – The software uses the MDRD calculator, but nephrology has evolved to the CKD epi calculator. (http://epigfr.com)

My suggestion is that the creators decide whether or not they are developing a patient tracking tool, a registry tool to be used for academia, or a physician tool for managing patients, and then focus on the specifics that are needed for each one.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have created patient care software, but have not marketed it. My software in no way would compete with this program. Therefore, I can declare that I have no competing interest.