Author’s response to reviews

Title: GET WELL: an automated surveillance system for gaining new epidemiological knowledge

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Changes made to the manuscript “GET WELL: an automated surveillance system for gaining new epidemiological knowledge”

Anette Hulth & Gustaf Rydevik

Comments from reviewer 1:

1. The authors report findings descriptively in Figures 4, 5, 6, but these figures/captions do not report the results of any statistical analysis. Was this intentional?

This was intentional. The graphs are included to support the discussions on the qualitative aspects of the system.

2. Can the authors include in the discussion section an idea of how this approach might work in other countries where there may be multiple competing health websites vs. one dominant site?

A passage has been added to the discussion.

3. Should public health departments start looking more closely at the trends from their own website logs (e.g., sites for specific diseases or conditions on their web sites)? Can the authors comment?

A sentence has been added to the discussion.

4. A weakness of the paper is its length. Given the content presented, the paper could be shortened. Specifically, the methods and results sections could be shortened without distracting from the paper’s findings.

The authors agree with the reviewer, but when looking at the content we cannot see where the text could be substantially shortened. For example, the paragraph on normalisation in the methods section is unarguably long, but we have not described this way of normalising the data previously.

5. What language(s) were used for the Google Insight analysis portion of the paper? Only Swedish?

Yes, only terms in Swedish were extracted from Google. A clarification has been made.

On page 16 what do the authors mean by “less vulnerable” can they elaborate? Do they mean less dependent?

“Less dependent” better captures what we meant, and we have changed the wording.

Comments from reviewer 2:

None.

Other changes

Text added to the acknowledgements section.

A sentence on animal health in the discussion has been rephrased.