Reviewer’s report

Title: Professional Use of the Internet among Dermatologists: A Cross-Sectional Survey

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Reviewer: Olaf G Aasland

Reviewer’s report:

This paper is interesting and timely within its field, particularly since it takes its data from a non-western culture. The main problems, which to a certain extent is handled by the author, is that some of the central European publications used for comparison are rather old (2001, data from 2000), and the topic under study - how doctors (dermatologists) use the internet - is undergoing very rapid transitions, like all other web-related issues. It would therefore be convenient to know something about the general status of web-use in Saudi Arabia (not only among doctors), is there complete concordance with western societies, or is there a time-lag?

Another question that arises when I read the paper is related to using the internet during patient consultations. The author seems to be concerned that only a few doctors actively practice this. If it is an ideal to be online during consultations, this should be explained and discussed more thoroughly. Another ideal may be not to use the computer during consultations. Several studies indicate that patients may experience the computer as a "rival" when seeing a doctor, because they don’t get the doctor’s full attention.

Major Compulsory Revisions

None

Minor Essential Revisions

Table 1 should include gender and age of the Saudi Arabian dermatologists that were not included in the study to see the representativeness of the sample.

Table 4 could be left out, this information does not seem essential to the study.

Figure 1: I don’t find it very interesting to distinguish between therapy, diagnosis, prognosis etc.

Discretionary Revisions

The mean time to search the internet to find an answer for a clinical problem seems to be as skewed as the different times spent weekly reported in previous paragraphs and should therefore also be reported by its median, not by its mean.
**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