Author's response to reviews

Title: How residents and interns utilise and perceive the personal digital assistant and UpToDate

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Version: 4 Date: 17 June 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
17 Jun 2008

To: Dr Hans Zauner, PhD
Assistant editor
BMC-series journals
BMC Medical Education

Dear Dr Zauner,

**Manuscript: How residents and interns utilise and perceive the personal digital assistant and UpToDate**

Thank you for accepting our manuscript. We also thank all referees once again.

Below is a point-by-point description of the changes made to the manuscript based on referee 2’s recommendations. We used italics and bold font for the referee’s original comments to improve visual clarity.

*When "PDA software" appears, please use "PDA software applications".*
We have added the word “applications” throughout the manuscript, including the abstract, the main text and the tables.

**Page 4, 1st para....replace "shown themselves to be" with "have become".**
We have done this.

**Page 5, 1st para in "Methods"....please change the following sentence so that it does not end with "for": "During the time of the study, UpToDate was the only electronic resource which our hospital had an institutional subscription for." Consider: "During the time of the study, UpToDate was the only electronic resource for which our hospital had an institutional subscription."**
We have done this.

*Please clarify how you found out what software interns had loaded? Was this in the questionnaire?*
Yes, this was in the questionnaire. We have stated in the Methods section: "We developed a questionnaire which captured information on ... the medical software applications used by PDA owners ..."

**pg. 13, para 1...please add "applications" to...."along with technical support and the installation of these software applications."**
We have revised this.

**pg. 13, 2nd para....consider eliminating the sentence:" This gives one an idea of the properties of an..." I think that this is self-evident from the**
described desirable properties. Also, for the next sentence....please add: "topics" to the introduction "Given that UpToDate features topics in..."
We have done these.

pg. 13, 3rd para.: please use another word other than "surfaced" in the first sentence. Consider: However, our study revealed two concerns.... or another similar word choice.
We have used the word "revealed".

pg. 14, 2nd para. remove "doctors' PDAs" in the following sentence:"This may again reflect a lack of technical support for physicians using PDAs" The support is for the physicians, not the software. Also, I believe it is overall technical support (not just the software).
We have clarified this by stating: “This may again reflect a lack of technical support for doctors using PDAs.”

pg 15, 1st para. change the third limitation to read: "Third, as this is a questionnaire study...." We have changed this.

pg. 15, 1st para. please clarify what is meant by "none of our house staff's PDAs had this thought). First of all, I would re-phrase it to state that none of our house staff had this on their PDA's, and then clarify if you are referring to the software UpToDate or the operating systems (Windows CE and Palm OS).
We have rephrased this: “Importantly, although none of our house staff’s PDAs contained software for UpToDate, UpToDate could in fact be downloaded onto PDAs with a Windows CE system at the time of our survey – though not onto a Palm operating system.”

Pg. 16, Conclusions. Change the opening sentence to: "To conclude, UpToDate and various PDA software applications were deemed useful by some of the residents and interns in our study, however both digital tools were under-utilised."
We have done this.

Yours sincerely,

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