Reviewer’s report

**Title:** The Italian hospitals in the web: a cross-sectional analysis of the official websites

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 10 February 2010

**Reviewer:** Robert A Logan

**Reviewer’s report:**

The authors responded professionally to the reviewers’ comments. The manuscript’s organization, provision of a situational context, handling of variables in the methods and findings sections, discussion of the overall findings contribution to the literature, and suggestions for future research each are significantly improved.

Since these were the areas I emphasized in my initial review, I believe the best course of action is to recommend the publication of this manuscript.

**Minor essential revisions:**

Although this manuscript’s prose is better than most I read when English is the authors second language, the paper could use another round of editing for language use and style. For example, I suggest the authors change the term ‘Codebook’ to ‘instrument.’

Here are examples of a sentence and a section that I suggest need to be rewritten. I provide a suggested revision for the authors consideration.

on p. 19 existing language: ‘However, differences between the three categories of hospital are consistent in all sections of the Codebook, providing evidence of the internal coherence of the study, and therefore supporting the validity of the Codebook.’

suggested revision:

However, the differences among the three hospital categories are consistent within all the sections of the instrument, which suggests its internal coherence and face validity.

on p. 19-20: existing language: ‘As an additional strength of the study, the Codebook we proposed can result a useful instrument for performing baseline surveys in countries where a baseline has not been done yet. Indeed, it is difficult to generalize the Italian situation to global patterns, as the great differences in health system organization and in Internet usage make each nation a unique setting. Besides, the extreme dynamic nature of the Internet makes quite compelling a frequent monitoring of the phenomenon, in order to assess its characteristics and to understand how to make the most out of its potentialities.'
Finally, the attention paid to the newest Web 2.0 tools makes our Codebook suitable for investigating the issue even in countries where the Internet access and the acceptance of other high technology innovations are more spread out than in the Italian context.

suggested revision:

Moreover, the proposed instrument may provide a useful prototype for baseline surveys in nations where similar hospital-Internet diffusion evaluations have not occurred. It is difficult to generalize the study’s findings to other countries because Italy has a unique health care organizational infrastructure and Internet usage patterns differ internationally. However, the Internet’s dynamic nature suggests it is important to assess its use and potential by hospitals and medical care organizations in diverse nations. In this regard, the study’s instrument may be adaptable for use in nations regardless of their level of Internet and ehealth acceptance, including countries where hospitals use Web 2.0 tools to those where public access to the Internet and health information technology is emerging.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.