Reviewer’s report

Title: Identification of features of electronic prescribing systems to support quality and safety in primary care using a modified Delphi process

Version: 1 Date: 22 February 2010

Reviewer: Peter Glassman

Reviewer’s report:

I reviewed the article and have the following comments

This article is a compilation of software features identified by literature review, key informants and expert group and that sought to prioritize those features based on the impact in four domains: patient safety, quality of care, and usefulness to the clinician and to the patient. A twelve member panel used a modified Delphi process to categorize/rank the software features, by domain. The goal was to help determine the features of an e-prescribing system to support the domains above and to begin to create standards for software.

The study was relatively straightforward in design and I have no major points of contention with the methods or the outcome of the work. As the authors noted (in the Discussion), the features are high level statements rather than detailed statements/specifications and in that sense, these provide an interesting framework, much of which is hard to argue with. Nonetheless, it is an interesting and comprehensive undertaking. My comments follow:

Abstract: No comments
Background: No comments
Methods: No comments
Results: Page 12, Middle paragraph starting with "All decision support..." In the list of warnings I did not see mention of the various order checks for drug interactions, including drug-allergy interactions though I saw this in the table (but perhaps that is included under the umbrella of contraindications?)
Discussion: Although you mention Bell et al and Avery et al, it would be helpful to briefly compare and contrast your findings, as appropriate.
Figures: No comments
Table 1: No comments

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.