Reviewer's report

Title: Electronic patient self-assessment and management (SAM): a novel framework for cancer survivorship

Version: 3 Date: 23 March 2010

Reviewer: Alec Holt

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions.

With reference to figures 4 and figure 5 and the associated text. Your methods of reporting risk factors was good. You might want to

1. Position what you have done back in with the literature (see Waters et al. (2009) below).
2. Add some more features to you SAM system (see Waters et al. (2009) below).

Waters et al. (2009) made a list of important factors to take into consideration when developing a tool through the empirical literature on risk communication. They demonstrated which risk communication formats were likely to be most useful in conveying individualised risk information to the public and helping them understand cancer risk estimates. A list of the factors and corresponding examples were as below:

• Describe the risk using words and numbers: “Your risk is low.” or “Your risk is 3%.”
• Communicate numeric risk as N in 1000 or as a percentage: “Your risk 30 in 1000.” or “Your risk is 3 times higher than average.”
• Provide absolute and comparative risk information: “Your risk is 3%. This is below average.” or “Your risk is 3%. The average risk is 5%.”
• Compare cancer risk to the risk of other hazards: “Your risk of getting cancer is 15%. The risk of being injured in a car accident is 10%.”
• Frame the risk in positive and negative terms: “Your risk is 2 in 100. Your chances of not getting cancer are 98 in 100.”
• Specify the duration of risk: “Your 5-year risk is …”
• Provide safety messages and risk reduction: “Stop smoking.”
• Include a visual display of risk: “Bar graph, line graph, or table.”
• Acknowledge that the risk estimate contains an element of uncertainty: “This estimate is based on information obtained from the population and your actual risk might be different.”


**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.