Reviewer's report

Title: Healthcare Provider Attitudes Towards the Problem List in an Electronic Health Record: A Mixed-Methods Qualitative Study

Version: 2 Date: 30 July 2012

Reviewer: Bill L Galanter

Reviewer's report:

This is a f/u review after author responses.

I appreciate the effort of the authors in considering the concerns of the reviewers. Overall I am satisfied with the responses, with the exception of the following issues;

Page #15, P1. “Of the thirteen vignettes with a yes or no response, ten had a clinically meaningful majority answer (more than 75% of respondents selected one answer).”

a) I am not sure what a “clinically meaningful majority” means as this is not a clinical tool, but rather a survey. Typically clinically meaningful means roughly a consensus that would mean something clinically to patients, whether statistically significant or not. I do not know how this applies to this survey tool.

b) I think that the main question is whether or not there was a consensus answer. This would typically be answered by making the null hypothesis; the # of yes’s and no’s are equal, and then testing it. Using a 75% of respondent’s criteria is a sample size dependent criteria. If the # of yes’s and # of no’s are equal, I am not sure why time should be spent trying to explain a difference or reporting a difference when no difference exists?

Example Question 3: Surgeries Answers

Yes=73.5%, No=26.5%

According to the arbitrary 75/25 rule, there was no majority.

According to basic statistics, 73.5 > 26.5 (p= 0.0001), Yes is statistically more common than no.

The text on page “According to the survey responses, a strong majority of practitioners answered for the family history (Question #1, Yes: 76%) and surgeries (Question #3, Yes: 73%) to be included on the problem list.”

So despite arbitrarily picking 75% as the majority rule, the authors understood the likely statistical significance of 73.5% and chose to call if a strong majority even though it did not meet the preselected criteria?

I think that if the quantitative part of a qualitative/quantitative study is more rigorous, it is more likely to be believed
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

none