Reviewer's report

Title: Healthcare professional acceptance of telemonitoring for chronic care patients in primary care

Version: 1 Date: 22 August 2012

Reviewer: Peter Cram

Reviewer's report:

COMMENTS TO THE EDITORS

I like this manuscript. It is nicely written and the analyses are thorough and complete. I think that the instrument they have developed will be useful to other researchers. I have a few comments (below). All could be easily addressed I believe.

GENERAL COMMENTS (MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS)

I have few significant methodological concerns about the study. I am a bit unclear why the authors are unable to compare the demographics of respondents and nonrespondents (Table 2). It would seem feasible to do this, though perhaps I am mistaken.

In both the Abstract and the Background sections I found it a bit difficult to understand the objective of the study. Was it to: 1) understand factors associated with clinicians professed interest in telehealth; or 2) develop an enhanced instrument for assessing clinicians interest in telehealth. At various points in the manuscript the tone of the paper seems to switch between these two related objectives. From my perspective, the study seems to have two objectives and this might be stated more clearly.

It would be helpful to state more clearly why a new and enhanced instrument is needed and why the prior version/iteration is not adequate.

I would like the authors to speak a bit more about the mixed results for telehealth implementations so far. The authors seem to work from the assumption that telehealth interventions improve care (page 4-5). However, there have been several prominent negative trials of telehealth and those should be mentioned as well for sake of balance.

I found it somewhat curious that the primary study outcome was “intention to use telemonitoring” and not actual use of telemonitoring. I might intend to exercise more but this is very different from actually exercising more. I would find it helpful for the authors to speak about the difference between intention and action (i.e., true adoption of telemonitoring) in the discussion.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS (DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS)
Abstract
• Does the objective of the current study also include validation of an expanded questionnaire? From the analyses and results this seems like a second objective to me.

Introduction
• It would be nice if the authors presented some of the negative studies of telehealth as well (there have been several including Krumholz NEJM paper and Takahashi Archives of IM piece).
• Could you explain the motivation for developing an enhanced questionnaire? From the methods presented, it sounds as if the existing questionnaire was already developed and validated. What was the need for a new and improved version and further validation?

Methods
• What were the results of the TELBIL study? Is the study complete? I could not tell from the information that was given in the section “context of the study.”
• Statistical methods were very nicely described.

Results
• From the data presented in Table 2, it would seem as if the authors could provide some comparison of respondents and nonrespondents with regards to sex, age, etc. I note however that in the Discussion the authors specifically mention that this is not feasible. If so, that is ok, but it would be helpful.
• Is there any way to provide data on the agreement between PU/PEU and actual use? From my perspective, the real question that I am most interested in are predictors of actual use of telehealth….not predictors of self-reported PU/PEU. If the authors had data on actual telemonitoring use, that would be outstanding.

Discussion
• Nicely written.
• Few concerns/questions. Most are reflected in my comments above.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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' below