Author's response to reviews

Title: Patient access to complex secondary care records on the Internet

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Dear Dr Patel,

**Patient access to complex secondary care records on the Internet**  
**Bartlett, Simpson and Turner**

Electronic accessibility of medical records is a highly topical and frequently controversial topic. However most discussions have been based on what patients might think about it, or should think about it, or have reported on responses to systems conveying information of relatively low value to the patient.

We now have experience from over 15,000 registered users of online access to information from a data-intensive, ‘complex’ secondary care chronic disease specialty with our Renal PatientView system. This was requested by and designed with patients, and it has been implemented in more than half of the UK’s renal centres. It shows patients live, unscreened lab results and other information with supporting information on the tests and on the patient’s diagnosis and treatment.

The degree of positive patient response, and lack of negative feedback from staff, is typical of other experiences with online medical records, but notable given the significance of the information we present. It carries a strong message for other specialties.

We present further information on barriers to use, noting wide variations in the rate of uptake and some demographic factors. These factors will be important as the role of electronic information transfer increases in Medicine.

Thank you for considering our manuscript

Yours sincerely

Neil Turner  
Cherry Bartlett  
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