Author's response to reviews

Title: Evaluation of data completeness in the electronic health record for the purpose of patient recruitment into clinical trials: a retrospective analysis of element presence

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Dear Mrs. Ladag,

thank you for your advice. The manuscript does indeed not contain a statement concerning the approval of the study by the five local ethics committees. We decided to omit a corresponding paragraph because the ethics committees in Germany are concerned only

(1) if research is carried out on humans or animals or

(2) if patient data or specimen are specifically collected for the purpose of the study or

(3) if data or specimen are processed in an individual-related way.

For the purpose of our study, patient data was only involved in counting the number of patients with data for specific data elements of the existing electronic health record. The study thus did not fulfil any of the three aforementioned conditions and did not necessitate the ethics committees' approvals.

Please advise us, whether a statement explaining this should be made in the manuscript.

With kind regard,
Felix Köpcke

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