Author's response to reviews

Title: The feasibility of using pattern recognition software to measure the influence of computer use on the consultation.

Authors:
Simon de Lusignan (slusigna@sghms.ac.uk)
Eben Wilson (eben.wilson@main.co.uk)
Andy N Dyble (AndyNDyble@aol.com)
Tristan Grant (tristan@talisman-uk.com)
Miss Alice Theadom (atheadom@sghms.ac.uk)
Tom Chan (Tom.Chan@shb-tr.nhs.uk)

Version: 2 Date: 24 Oct 2003

The peer reviewers comments were highly appreciated and offered valuable advice on the points of the article that needed further clarity.

Revisions to the abstract: The method and the results sections were extended to include further details about pattern recognition software, to emphasise that it was a feasibility study and to explain more clearly how pattern recognition software was tested and analysed.

Revisions to the introduction: The structure of the background section was changed to focus the discussion on the key issues relating to the impact of the computer on the consultation and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of traditional approaches more comprehensively. Efforts were made to make the distinction between pattern recognition software and the use of three channel video that was used in a previous study clearer.

Revisions to the Method: A sentence was included to emphasise that pattern recognition software was tested in a simulated consulting room.

Revisions to the Discussion: In the principal findings section, changes were made and further details added to make it clearer exactly what was the study revealed. Efforts were made to emphasise the importance of developing a valid and reliable method to evaluate the impact of computer use on non-verbal behaviour in the consultation. The implications and limitations of the use of pattern recognition software were discussed more comprehensively.

As suggested from peer review 3 figures were deleted that were not directly related to the study findings.