Reviewer's report

Title: Distribution of immunodeficiency fact files with XML - from Web to WAP

Version: 1 Date: 12 May 2004

Reviewer: Christophe BEROUĐ

Reviewer's report:

General

This paper describes a new approach to build a data model called fact file to facilitate the collection of hereditary disease information. This is an interesting approach, which has been validated by the authors on primary immunodefficiencies.

A) I have only few comments about this approach:
1) Has these fact files been used by other teams to design databases?
2) Who is curating the XML files?
3) How do you deal with clinical information from the “OTHER CLINICAL FEATURES” field from your submission form.
4) Do you have collaborations with clinicians and/or diagnostic labs that directly fill in the fact files?
5) In one word: are-you the only ones to use this system?

B) I think that the data storage section is a missing crucial section. How are XML-based data stored and analyzed? The reader has to go to 2 previously published papers to get answers to this question.

C) I have general comments about data management. This paper describes only the input part of the data process. I am concerned about the data treatment that is usually the hardest part of the job. Did you develop specific tools to illustrate your affirmation from the background section: “The biomedical informatics holds great promise for developing informatics methods that will be crucial in the development of genomic medicine”?

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Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract section: "it is difficult to find and retrieve" has been duplicated. Please discard one.

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What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None