Reviewer’s report

Title: Medical record linkage in health information system by approximate string matching, graph drawing and clustering

Version: 1 Date: 13 May 2005

Reviewer: George Vassilacopoulos

Reviewer’s report:

General

The article presents a method for detecting exact and approximate duplicates within identity records that could be used to enable readily access to integrated patient information even though it may be scattered around different databases.

The list of references provided in the article is acceptable and a formal literature review (background) paragraph is included. In addition, the practicability of the method is demonstrated using real world patient data and a comparative discussion of the method is presented.

The possibility of applying the method to link isolated and geographically dispersed patient information in an inter-institutional healthcare networked information system makes this article interesting.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The article needs some language and typing error corrections before it is published.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.