Author's response to reviews

Title: Evidence for handheld electronic medication records in improving care: a systematic review

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June 12, 2006

RE: MS: 1516443112973500 - Evidence for handheld electronic medication records in improving care: a systematic review

Response to comments:

Reviewer: J. Handler

The abstract should mention that the set of rejected studies did not include any that were controlled but not randomized.

The results section of the abstract has been changed to include the following:

No other randomized controlled studies or non-randomized controlled trials were found that met our inclusion criteria.

Editors Comments

I would also like to point out that BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making has recently published a systematic review on the effectiveness of handheld computers for data collection: http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6947/6/23/abstract. Given that this work seems to be highly related to your study, you may want to revise your manuscript to briefly discuss the results reported in that article.

Since the recently published systematic review is highly related, we have included another paragraph in our discussion:

A recent systematic review found that data collection by handheld computers is an effective alternative to paper methods.[28] There is some similarity between their systematic review and ours. Both review RCTs of handhels, and both found studies that primarily assessed data collection or documentation. Yet the perspectives are different. Our review focused on the use of handheld electronic medical records, while their review included any form of handheld data collection. None of their included studies involved the use of handheld EMRs by clinicians. Instead, patients or healthy volunteers performed the data collection. Their review did find that data collection by handhelds was faster and preferred by users. The decreased handheld data collection time is different than what we found, but this is likely a result of different users and different applications.

Yours sincerely,

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