Author's response to reviews

Title: The experiential health information processing model: supporting collaborative web-based patient education

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Version: 2 Date: 7 November 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr. Talbot,

Please find enclosed our revised submission, “The experiential health information processing model: supporting collaborative web-based patient education”. Thank you for considering it. We appreciate the time and effort of those who made suggestions and feel that these have greatly improved the paper. Please find below a point-by-point response to the concerns as requested.

Celia Boyer’s comments

- Additional work should be conducted in this field such as a survey in order to better understand the positive and negative outcome of Web-based platform for managing an illness day to day (to be used by the patient or their family).

We have added some material at the middle of page 15 (starting with, “Another avenue of future research …”) as a way to addresses this.

- Page 5 : inverted references

We have fixed this mistake.

Diane J Skiba’s comments
• I would introduce the notion of Web 2.0 tools earlier in the paper, perhaps before your section on "collaboration in Web-based patient education".

We moved the section starting with “Recent advances and cultural shifts” that discusses Web 2.0 to the introductory material on page 4.

• You mention the tools but you might want to discuss how the web has transformed from passive to interactive and is now more driven towards user's involvement in creating content.

There is a sentence starting with “Fewer technical barriers …” in the paragraph noted above that discusses this shift.

• I think it would be helpful to have a more detailed example of applying Kolb's experiential learning model. It does not seem to fit...is it a model to be used for future research or future development? Does it help to explain why people like the social aspects and talking with each other regarding their diseases or their treatments?

The material found on page 13 that starts with the sentence, “A key step will be to test this model empirically.” addresses these issues.

• I think you might want to also elaborate about the "wisdom of crowds" framework and how that seems to permeate the web.

The sentence starting with “This concept, where knowledge is generated amongst a group of individuals…” found on the top of page 5 addresses this issue.

• It would be helpful to position where this movement fits with the drive for more consumer centric care? Should more health care professionals use these new tools to create more consumer centric tools associated with their clinics or hospitals? Where does this fit with the movement of Personal Health Records?

The section on page 16 starting with the sentence, “The face of health care on the Internet is changing…” addresses these concerns.

Comments from Robert A Logan

• I strongly suggest the authors make a more compelling case why the topic addressed is comparatively unusual, extraordinary, or under explored and deserves a literature review to generate related research…. I suggest the authors explain why introducing the topic addressed in this study is in-and-of-itself a contribution to the current research literature.

The sentence that starts with, “However, little research…” found in at the end of the paragraph on page 5 is intended to in part address this concern as is the sentence on page
11 that starts with, “What is new is the increased ability…”. The section that starts with the sentence, “Other information seeking theories examine…” on page 10 is also intended to address this concern.

- I recommend the authors integrate more literature on health information seeking from the consumer health informatics literature…

The material that starts with the sentence, “Other information seeking theories examine …” on page 10 addresses this concern.

- …and the growing literature on health literacy.

Material on this issue appears in the section that starts with the sentence, “Concerns about misunderstanding and misuse…” on page 7.

- I suggest the authors explain if the cited developments in web-based collaborative patient education are distinctive from the current literature about interpersonal educational health information seeking on the web in the health literacy and consumer health informatics literature.

Material addressing these concerns can be found in the last sentence on page 10.

- Kolb’s theory may be a research framework that helps a researcher assess collaborative web-based patient education in a multidimensional manner.

Further information regarding this issue has been added starting on page 13 starting with the sentence, “A key step will be to test this model empirically.”

- However, the authors do not detail the theory

We believe the material found on the bottom of page 13 and onto page 14 provides more information about the framework that addresses this concern.

- and do not take the time to explain its relative advantages and disadvantages in comparison with other, well known, conceptual frameworks about consumer health information seeking.

Information explaining this is found on page 10 in the sentence that starts, “Other information seeking theories examine …”

- why do the authors believe it is superior to multidimensional theories of consumer motivation and health information seeking within the health communication literature, such as the theory of reasoned action, the health belief model, and the extended parallel process model?
As above, information on this can be found with the sentence that starts, “Other information seeking theories examine …” on page 10

We have changed the paper to a type 3 Correspondence article, reformatted the abstract and used the BMC154d.dot template to format the original submission as well as the biomedcentral.ens EndNote style file for the references.

Thank you again for your efforts. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Laura O’Grady, PhD