Reviewer's report

Title: The Cancer Translational Research Informatics Platform

Version: 3 Date: 16 April 2008

Reviewer: Aziz Boxwala

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Major Compulsory Revisions

In the Implementation section, please describe how caTRIP was implemented at Duke in Phase one. Include for example, the services or data sources that were included in the implementation. Please describe the experience of the initial group of users. It also would be beneficial to include an example of one of the scientific use cases and dissect how it is executed within the phase One implementation.

In the Technical Requirements section, please include a very brief summary of the scientific use cases. It is inadequate to direct the readers to the document that is online.

Please clarify whether the software is available at no cost for non-commercial use, per the policy of the journal.

Minor Essential Revisions

In the abstract, please remove references to terms that are not commonly understood or not defined within the abstract such as foreign CDEs and automated honest broker service.

The writing of this paper needs major improvement. There are several typographical errors, spelling errors, and incorrect uses of grammar (e.g., split infinitives, inconsistencies in parallelisms). I have pointed out a few of these below. I recommend the manuscript be reviewed by a language editor prior to resubmission.

Section Abstract

"In line with its mission of accelerating research discoveries and improve...". Suggest using "improving" instead of improve

Section Introduction

"caTRIP allows isers to query across a number of caBIG data services, " There is a typo - "isers" should be "users"

"Of importance, caTRIP elies on the"
Typo - elies

" (5) calIntegrator http://gforge.nci.nih.gov/projects/caintegrator), a tool for storing queryng, and analysung translational data, including SNP data."
Typos: queryng, analysung

Section Distributed Query Engine
"from scratch" is a colloquial term. Please describe in a more formal language. Please explain why you had to build one - was one not available elsewhere?

Section Authorization
The following citation {Phillips, 2006} is not included in the references.

Section Delegation and Foreign CDEs
"One change on the security workflow is delegation"
It should be "One change in the..."
Also, please clarify - this change is with respect to what?

"A trust fabric is instantiated ..."
Define what you mean by trust fabric

Section Future Development
"In phase one of caTRIP, use cases focused on intra-institutional problems, tearing down the silos of data-oriented systems in a single cancer center."

Please use terms consistently: phase one uses lower case here, and uses upper case in the previous section

Also, the earlier writing has not established that silos were torn down. As recommended earlier, a description of how different data sources at Duke were integrated is important.

Discretionary Revisions

In the Distributed Query Engine, an example of how a DCQL breaks up into a CQL would be helpful.

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, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests