Reviewer's report

Title: Toward Successful Implementation of Electronic Health Records (EHR) in Ambulatory Practice Settings

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Reviewer: Pekka Ruotsalainen

Reviewer's report:

In my mind the article stands outside the scope of BMC Medical Informatics and Decision making.

For future work have following suggestions:

1. Writers should explain the specific business model of small ambulatory setting/clinic. I understand that those clinics are servicing "walk in patients". But are they "random patients" or, do the clinic have for example a closed catchment population, or are family doctors working there?

2. Which are specific problems for small ambulatory setting the EHR should solve compared to large settings?

3. Which are functions the EHR should include in the case of small settings?

4. Based on previous bullet points 1-3 writers should create rules or guidelines for the selection of suitable EHR for small settings. For example, do the clinic need an integrated EHR, a domain specific EHR, an EHR with personal longitudinal summary record, eConsultation facilities or a medication record?

5. Writers should explain how the selected EHR supports "better quality of care" in small ambulatory setting? Are there any metrics or indicators available?

Finally:
- It is not necessary to have a long list different EHR definitions. What is need, is just the discussion what kind of EHR a small ambulatory setting needs and how to select, implement and maintain it?
- Benefits and barriers discussed at general level in this paper are well known, but which are barriers and benefits specific for small ambulatory settings (if any)?
- I think that the return of investments is meaningful and should be discussed.
- Because there exist a huge amount of papers and books on implementation of EHR, it is not necessary to duplicate wellknown facts. Writes should concentrate to the basic question "how to select and implement an EHR system for small ambulatory settings".
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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.