Reviewer's report

Title: An online evaluation about the effect of a personnel intervention pilot study for village doctors using electronic health records

Version: 2 Date: 7 February 2014

Reviewer: Rosa Lau

Reviewer's report:

General
Minor essential revisions
Clarity of the paper needs to be improved.
This is not a randomized controlled trial, therefore should avoid using the word "trial". Instead, use the word "intervention", e.g. intervention participants or intervention group.

Discretionary revisions
Was theoretical framework considered in your research?

Title/abstract
Major compulsory revisions
The title lacks clarity - this is essentially an educational intervention targeted at health care professionals (delivered by primary health care personnel)
Suggestive title: The effects of an educational intervention on the use of EHRs among village doctors: a pilot study
The term "online evaluation" in the title is somewhat ambiguous, was the evaluation carried out via an online questionnaire?
Abstract - need to specify what the outcome measures were, and when they were measured, i.e. baseline and end of 6 months.

Introduction
Minor essential revisions
Page 4 line 3 - correct abbreviation for electronic health records, EHR not HER.
Page 4 line 9 - the term "the use of" was repeated - delete as appropriate

Methods
Major compulsory revisions
Authors stated the townships were selected on the basis of their size and the background and training or experience of the doctors - how (please clarify).
"...two similar community health services were chosen". This need further clarification, what does it mean by "similar"?
Insufficient details were given with regard to the intervention.
Define personnel intervention - is it the same as educational intervention?
What does the intervention involve? Demonstration? Practice? Discussion? One to one session vs. small group session?
The authors specified the duration of the intervention (6 months), but not the number of sessions. Frequency and intensity were unclear, e.g. an hourly session each week.
Suggestive text: participants in the intervention group received a 6-month training, which comprised x, y and z.

Minor essential revisions
It may be useful to explain further on the following:
Describe more about personalised guidance (tailored?).
Proactive - example? Did the intervention involve practicals/ feedback sessions?
Was it an online survey/ questionnaire? What questions were asked in the questionnaire?
Specify primary and secondary outcome measures.

Data analysis

Major essential revisions
Describe the type of baseline demographic characteristics data included.
This section needs to be described in more detail, e.g. independent sample t-test for continuous variables, and Chi square test for categorical variables.
Define statistical significance, e.g. a two-sided p values <.05.

Discretionary revisions
No information on power calculation - was it carried out?

Results

Major essential revisions
Baseline information
Any additional information such as practice size, years of practice experience, age of doctor etc. These characteristics information could have influenced outcomes (i.e. doctors’ use of EHR)

Minor essential revisions
Results on vaccination and health management records in children were based on small sample size. Therefore, results need to be interpreted with caution.

Discussion

Minor essential revisions
Page 10 line 9, typo - at present, "in" developed countries.
Page 10 last line - "less" developed areas, instead of undeveloped areas.

No reference to other relevant (similar) work was made - how is the finding of the present study compared to published literature?

Discussion about the reasons medical staff were reluctant to use EHR - no reference(s) included.

Conclusions

Minor essential revisions

Suggest further research - replicate the study including more sites/ larger sample size, using different methodology e.g. cluster RCT.

Tables

Minor essential revisions

Highlight statistical significance in tables (e.g. in bold, italics, or insert asterisk) and insert footnotes (e.g. p<0.05; p<0.00)

When indicating sample size in table, it would be useful to put (N=X).

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.