Reviewer's report

Title: Multicenter data acquisition made easy

Version: 1 Date: 23 March 2010

Reviewer: Gordon Doig

Reviewer's report:

This is a fascinating methodology paper. Could I please request you address a few outstanding issues:

1. Security. Please include a section reporting whether or not the web site transmits password information and data in an encrypted format. For example, does it use SSL 2.0? What level of encryption (how many bits)?

2. Technical compatibility. Please include a section reporting user browser compatibility and version requirements. For example, is it required to have JavaScript enabled etc.

3. Global data locations and privacy laws. Many HRECs wish to be informed when patient records, even de-identified ones, are transported internationally. It is possible that the hosting Google Server is located in a country that is not participating in the trial. Does Google have a policy stipulating that local country of origin applies to privacy or do the Server's local country laws apply? What is Google's privacy policy? Keeping in mind that Google likely captures the IP address of the data entry person, which can easily be tracked back to originating hospital, it is possible some patient records could be re-identified by a hacker. If the web site is not encrypted, this possibility is real. Please address in your Discussion.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests.