Reviewer's report

Title: Why primary care practices should become digital health information hubs for their patients

Version: 2 Date: 27 August 2014

Reviewer: Jenny Ure

Reviewer's report:

Discretionary Revisions
1. Clarify terms such as Meaningful Use not familiar to a non US audience (L6)
2. Inclusion of some non-US references (Examples given)
3. Even out differences in style between Lines12-28 and style of rest of the paper.

A-Does the debate address an important problem of interest to a broad biomedical audience?

What happens to patient generated data, who owns it, and how it is integrated and how such issues impact on the cost and quality of healthcare are of core interest at the moment. This is therefore a topic of wide relevance and topicality, and where publication would contributes usefully to the field.

Good arguments are presented, exemplified and contextualised and the arguments provide a useful addition to the debate.

The US context is different from that of readers in Europe, and elsewhere, however, so a discussion in terms such as Meaningful Use legislation might need to be clarified. It might also be useful to include some references to comparable legislation and associated initiatives in the EU or the OECD. (One example might be the EU legislation on Action 13 as part of the Digital Agenda http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-10-200_en.htm This funds partner projects across multiple EU countries, such as SUSTAINS www.sustains-eu.org and PALANTE http://www.palante-project.eu/consortium that also seek to address these issues, but through patient portals.

B -Does the debate present a novel argument or a novel insight into existing work?

The paper outlines the arguments for a novel approach to the problem of integrating data from primary care with patient generated data, data from mHealth apps and others, with a view to enhancing the quality and the cost of healthcare.

The argument for using primary care practices as the locus for a digital data integration hub is presented as a novel alternative means of resolving the difficulties inherent in the alternatives already presented in the literature, such as
the inability or unwillingness of some vulnerable groups to manage their own data.

C-Has the author used logical arguments and sound reasoning?
The different options for integrating data in this way are very clearly presented and argued, however terms, references and the relevant legislation (e.g. Meaningful Use in Line 6) assume an audience familiar with the context of US legislation and practice, as mentioned above.

D -Is the piece written well enough for publication?
The piece is clearly written and argued, and presented in a way which does prompt the reader to reconsider the landscape and consider the implications of alternative configurations, as the Debate format is intended to do.
Lines 12-28 giving the personal background to the authors views is are more colloquial and informal than in the tone of the rest of the report (Line 15 tech savvy, L23 playing around) and breaks the flow a little.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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