Reviewer’s report

Title: Patient Portal Messaging for Care Coordination: A Qualitative Study of Perspectives of Experienced Users with Chronic Conditions

Version: 0 Date: 17 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Daniel Epstein

Reviewer's report:

Reviewer comments as per SPQR guideline reflection

This article has robust qualitative methodology and represents interesting data with good example quotes and a good discussion. I think some areas of the study need to be further commented on or justified in revision before publication.

1. Contextual factors of clinic where sample was chosen from to be included eg demographics, socioeconomic status etc

2. In regards to recruitment, further clarification on how patients were recruited is required. Was it at the PFAC meetings where patients were recruited? Or was this were recruiting doctors were given flyers to approach appropriate patients? It is unclear how and in what setting interested patients signed up.

3. Comment required in methods about rationale as to why healthcare providers were not excluded from the sample. The aim stated at the conclusion of the background section as: "The study presented here addresses this need by examining more deeply the use of secure messaging to manage care among patients with chronic conditions who are experienced portal users."

4. Demographics table or more descriptive commentary required in regards to participant representation of age, sex, socioeconomic status etc.

5. Commentary required on why recruiting was concluded. Given that only 11 participants were true patients only and not provider/patients, was this enough of a sample to reach saturation in themes? Please comment in methods.

6. Demographics required next to quotes eg "- male, age 52" may be useful for context when reading
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal