Reviewer's report

Title: Practicing evidence based medicine at the bedside: Tablets & Co - assessment of usability in everyday clinical life

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Reviewer: Christopher Pearce

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review this interesting paper. The use of tablets as a bedside tool is one that is talked about, but only now starting to be implemented. Computers on Wheels (COWs) have been around for a while.

Major revisions: As a usability enthusiast, the title made me expect to see a discussion about the practical aspects of using the unbound Medline on the pads, what navigation of the site was like, etc. Perhaps the title should be different: Acceptability? practicality?

Following on from that, the use of Medline as the only source of evidence is limiting, and this limitation needs to be better acknowledged in the introduction and limitations section. Doctors use a wide variety of evidence based resources - UpToDate, Cochrane reviews, and there are attempts to structure this better for the busy clinician (see health pathways New Zealand, for example). There are also studies showing that Google search can be faster and just as accurate as Medline.

It is described as a controlled study, but where are the controls? Students without access or the students using PC's.

Thanks again.

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

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

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.