Author's response to reviews

Title: Design and evaluation of software for the objective and easy-to-read presentation of new drug properties to physicians

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Reviewer's report

Title: Design and evaluation of software for the objective and easy-to-read presentation of new drug properties to physicians

Version: 6 Date: 4 January 2015

Reviewer: Birgit Eiermann

Reviewer's report:

The paper has very much improved. After going through the very few comments the article is ready for publication. Minor essential revision:

Page 5: in the beginning: …… information, with a view to improving understanding of the risks Should be……. information, with a view to improve understanding of the risks.

Our response: This sentence has been removed.

Page 7: We described the context of use of new drug, the type of novelty of new drug, and elements influencing the impact (e.g. efficacy, safety, ease of use) of new manufactured product with respect to…..

Add an article: ….. We described the context of use of a new drug, the type of novelty of a new drug, and elements influencing the impact (e.g. efficacy, safety, ease of use) of a new manufactured product with respect to…..

Our response: This sentence has been modified.

Page 8: You mention Figure 2 here. But it is the first figure you mention in the text. You should see over the numeration of all figures (maybe mention the other figures earlier) so that the numbers are correct.

We have removed the references to figures in the Methods section. Such references now appear only in the Results section, in the right order.

Page 15: We felt that it was useful to show the daily cost of the drug.

Change to: Daily costs of the drug are presented if available. (or anything else but not “we felt”)

Our response: The sentence has been modified as suggested.

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'
Reviewer's report

**Title**: Design and evaluation of software for the objective and easy-to-read presentation of new drug properties to physicians

**Version**: 6  **Date**: 29 December 2014

**Reviewer**: Harry Hochheiser

**Reviewer's report**: 

Major compulsory revisions:

I thank the authors for their consideration of my previous review comments. However, I must note that some of the authors' responses came in the form of rebuttals that argued against my suggestions, as opposed to incorporating them in the manuscript. Below, I summarize these comments, relevant responses, and my comments to those responses:

1. My first concern addressed the application of this tool to new drugs, as opposed to being a more general drug information system. The authors responded: "It would be impossible to design a tool capable of comparing the impact of all the drugs that could be prescribed for the same indication. For each drug, different comparators and endpoints would be used. Information processing would thus be highly complex in any system aiming to compare all the possible drugs for the same indication...Other tools providing guidance for prescription purposes already exist. Instead, this tool is designed to be consulted periodically, by physicians seeking information about new pharmaceutical products."

I disagree with this premise that this tool could not be a general purpose drug information source. Just as the proposed tool displays information about a new medication against a chosen comparator, a general interface could in theory display a selected comparator (perhaps the most frequently prescribed) for an existing drug. That said, I do not believe that this difference of opinion should be a stopping point. Rather, I suggest two specific changes in response to this point: 1a. Please say more about the information systems that provide guidance for prescription purposes, including commercial tools, and clarify differences between the proposed tool and these existing tools. 1b. Indicate why a distinct tool is needed for new drugs, considering that a long-established drug that has not been used by a given practitioner might still be "new" to that individual.

**Our response:**

**We have followed suggestions 1a and 1b of the reviewer:**

1a. We have modified the background section and now describe more precisely and criticize the information systems providing information about drug properties for the guidance of drug prescription.

1b. We explain at the end of the background section that we present a new comparative tool helping physicians to evaluate the utility of new drugs and we explain that it would be of interest to develop such a tool for the comparison of all drugs, but that would be very difficult to achieve.
Minor essential revisions:

2. Regarding drug fact boxes, the authors explain that their principal disadvantage is that they are on paper, rather than computerized. I am confused by this statement, as DailyMed (http://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/index.cfm) provides detailed label information in a web-based format, with an available API. Please acknowledge this availability and discuss any shortcomings, particularly those relevant to your proposed system.

   Our response:
   
   We agree with the reviewer and we have modified the content of the background section relating to drug fact boxes.

Discretionary revisions:

3. I raised the concern that the proposed interfaces might be inefficient in terms of information density, suggesting that a summary of highlighted information could be provided on the initial screen for any drug. The authors responded by describing the presentation of the synthetic information on the first screen. This is simply a restatement of content in the paper - it is not a substantive response. I suggest the addition of additional discussion of the possibility of adding more detail to the display.

   Our response:

   We have added an explanation to the Discussion section.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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