OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
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- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

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https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

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Peer Review Report for "Virtual Hospitals During COVID-19 Pandemic: Pros and Cons"

Author(s): Saeed Shahabi, Najmeh Maharlouei, Maryam Jalali, Kamran Bagheri Lankarani

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 9 Jan 2021
Revised Date: 3 May 2021
Accepted Date: 4 May 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

6 Feb 2021

Dear AE,
The manuscript I have reviewed rises a new idea that could be interesting for health policymakers. As I review, I present some suggestions for improvement of the manuscript. My comments are as follow:
- In abstract line 2 the authors stated that "Increasing demand for health services, especially inpatient cares." it should be considered that the demand for some services such as elective procedures has decreased due to covid-19 and fear of infection from the patient side. This should be considered in the second sentence of the main text.
- I expect to see some sentences about virtual hospitals and what they are in the abstract. The authors discuss about necessity and challenges of virtual hospitals but it lacks the definition of the virtual hospital.
- As I see, some sentences in the abstract are completely the same as ones in the main text. The abstract should develop from all parts of the text not some sentences which are copied from the main text. Therefore, it would be better if the authors rewrite the abstract and avoid using the sentences which are completely similar in the main text.
- If possible and available, it would be better if the authors present more experiences of virtual hospitals in developing countries. As well, it could be more useful if the authors discuss about strength and weaknesses of the experiences in general.

- It would be better if the authors use valid references and studies for strengths and challenges of virtual hospitals.
I hope my comments could improve the quality of the manuscript.
Regards.

Mohammadreza Zakeri: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 7 Mar 2021

Dear AE,
The manuscript needs:
- Rearrangement toward: a clear definition, Importance, what we know internationally, what we can do in our country, conclusion, and recommendation.
- Technical edit
- English edit
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 7 Mar 2021

Dear EIC
The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggest some minor revisions to the manuscript. Therefore, I invite the author to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise his manuscript.
Kind regards,

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 7 Mar 2021

Dear Author,
Your article is reviewed by the reviewers carefully. According to their comments, this document needs minor revision. Please follow their comments as requested.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Authors' response

Manuscript ID 112781

Dear Prof. Lankarani,

Editor, Shiraz E-Medical Journal

Thank you for reviewing the manuscript and thank you for giving us the opportunity to revise our manuscript entitled "Virtual hospital in COVID-19 pandemic: pros and cons". We appreciate the time and effort that you and the reviewers have dedicated to providing your valuable feedback on our manuscript. We are grateful to the reviewers for their insightful comments on our paper and have been able to incorporate changes to reflect most of the suggestions provided by the reviewers. Here is a point-by-point response to the reviewers' comments.

Editor:

Thank you for submitting this valuable review study to SEMJ. The subject is interesting and practical in COVID era. However, it needs some minor changes according to the referees' comments as follow.

Thank you for pointing all these comments out. We have carefully revised the manuscript taking into full account all reviewers' concerns.

Reviewer #1:
The manuscript need:
1. Rearrangement toward : a clear definition, Importance, what we know internationally, what we can do in our country, conclusion and recommendation.

Thanks so much for this suggestion. In accordance with your valuable comments, as highlighted, we revised and added some content to manuscript.

2. Technical edit. English edit
Sorry for mistakes. We strived to solve them using English native institute.

Reviewer #2:
The manuscript I have reviewed rises a new idea that could be interesting for health policy makers. As I review, I present some suggestions for improvement of the manuscript. My comments are as follow:

Thanks a lot for appreciation our study.

4. In the abstract line 2 the authors stated that "Increasing demand for health services, especially inpatient cares." it should be considered that the demand for some services such as elective

procedures has decreased due to covid-19 and fear of infection from the patient side. This should be considered in the second sentence of the main text.

Thanks so much for this valuable comment. Based on your comment, we revised the mentioned sentence as following: "Despite declining demand for some services such as elective procedures following COVID-19 pandemic, severe increase in COVID-19 patients has put...".

5. I expect to see some sentences about virtual hospitals and what they are in the abstract. The authors discuss about necessity and challenges of virtual hospitals but it lacks the definition of the virtual hospital.

Thanks a lot for this suggestion. We added following paragraph to main text to clarify the concept of virtual hospital:" Virtual hospitals, indeed, strive to provide acute and sub-acute care services in patients' homes instead of usual hospital cares using virtual reality and telemedicine. After initial triage and assigning eligible patients to the virtual hospital, they are provided a home monitoring kit including automated blood pressure cuff, thermometer and pulse oximeter to be able to continuously monitor their condition. Also, a registered nurse or another health care worker communicates with the patient (or his/her family members) by telephone at least several times a day (e.g. once every six hours) to learn about the patient's condition and symptoms. There is also a 24-hour hotline for patients to share their concerns with a nurse or other trained person and receive necessary guidance. In cases that the patient's condition is unfavorable or the symptoms are getting worse, the emergency team is notified to transfer the patient to one of the medical centers for further intervention. Meanwhile, if possible, a mobile team of health care staff, including a specialist or general practitioner and nurse, can visit the patient's home to visit and examine his/her".

6. As I see, some sentences in the abstract are completely the same as ones in the main text. The abstract should develop from all parts of the text not some sentences which are copied from the main text. Therefore, it would be better if the authors rewrite the abstract and avoid using the sentences which are completely similar in the main text.

Thank you and sorry for mistakes. We rewrite and revised the abstract for better readability.

7. If possible and available, it would be better if the authors present more experiences of virtual hospitals in developing countries. As well, it could be more useful if the authors discuss about strength and weaknesses of the experiences in general.

Thanks a lot for pointing out this expert comment. Based you comment, we add some experiences of virtual cares during previous epidemics such as SARS and MERS: " In fact, providing virtual care can lead to ease social distancing measures and decreasing the waiting times. Furthermore, reducing face-to-face contacts among health care staff and patients can be another benefit of virtual hospitals, which results in a reduced chance of transmitting the virus. Such benefits of virtual services can also be seen in the successful management of epidemics such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)".

8. It would be better if the authors use valid references and studies for strength and challenges of virtual hospitals.
I hope my comments could improve the quality of the manuscript.

Thanks so much. We used new references.

Thank you for pointing all these comments out. We have carefully revised the manuscript taking into full account all your' concerns. We look forward to hearing from you regarding our submission and to respond to any further questions and comments you may have.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (1)** 4 May 2021

Dear Author,
The document is reviewed carefully by the reviewers. According to their comments and your revisions as requested, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks.