Clinical Information Systems as the Backbone of a Complex Information Logistics Process: Findings from the Clinical Information Systems Perspective for 2016

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Summary

Objective: To summarize recent research and to propose a selection of best papers published in 2016 in the field of Clinical Information Systems (CIS).

Method: The query used to retrieve the articles for the CIS section of the 2016 edition of the IMIA Yearbook of Medical Informatics was reused. It again aimed at identifying relevant publications in the field of CIS from PubMed and Web of Science and comprised search terms from the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) catalog as well as additional free text search terms. The retrieved articles were categorized in a multi-pass review carried out by the two section editors. The final selection of candidate papers was then peer-reviewed by Yearbook editors and external reviewers. Based on the review results, the best papers were then chosen at the selection meeting with the IMIA Yearbook editorial board. Text mining, term co-occurrence mapping, and topic modelling techniques were used to get an overview on the content of the retrieved articles.

Results: The query was carried out in mid-January 2017, yielding a consolidated result set of 2,190 articles published in 921 different journals. Out of them, 14 papers were nominated as candidate best papers and three of them were finally selected as the best papers of the CIS field. The content analysis of the articles revealed the broad spectrum of topics covered by CIS research.

Conclusions: The CIS field is multi-dimensional and complex. It is hard to draw a well-defined outline between CIS and other domains or other sections of the IMIA Yearbook. The trends observed in the previous years are progressing. Clinical information systems are more than just sociotechnical systems for data collection, processing, exchange, presentation, and archiving. They are the backbone of a complex, trans-institutional information logistics process.

Keywords
Medical informatics; International Medical Informatics Association; Yearbook; clinical information systems

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Introduction

In 2017, we reused the optimized query that we developed for the Clinical Information Systems (CIS) section of the 2016 edition of the IMIA Yearbook of Medical Informatics. The number of retrieved papers increased by nearly 20 percent as compared to the previous year. The trends that we observed in the previous years are continuing.

About the Paper Selection

The process described in [1] was again applied to select the candidate papers for the CIS section. Primarily, descriptors from the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) thesaurus were used as search terms to cover the major topics of the CIS section: hospital records, health information exchange, health and clinical information systems and meaningful use, among others. In addition, as the indexing with MeSH descriptors may occur with a lag of several months after the inclusion of an article in PubMed, free text search terms covering the same topics were used to search within the title and abstract fields of PubMed ([TIAB] operator).

As in the previous years, free-text search was restricted to citations labeled with status “publisher” or “inprocess”, which signifies the lack of MeSH-indexing. The query was further restricted to journal articles published in 2016, in English language, and including an abstract (2016[DP] AND “english”[LA] AND “journal article”[PT] AND “has abstract”). Topics from other IMIA Yearbook sections were excluded as far as possible with appropriate MeSH and free text terms. Articles retrieved for the 2016 IMIA Yearbook were likewise excluded. Additional exclusions by publication type were added to restrict the query to original research articles and reviews. The free-text query was additionally reformatted for Web of Science® (from Thomson Reuters) with an additional restriction to the subject area “Medical Informatics” and the exclusion of articles which already had been found in PubMed. The full queries are available upon request from the corresponding authors.

The queries were carried out in mid-January 2017. The search result set comprised 2,478 papers. Articles which had been published already in 2015 but showed up in the
result set (n=208) were removed. Although classified as journal articles by PubMed, all conference papers published in Studies in Health Technology and Informatics (n=80) were also excluded, yielding a combined result set from PubMed and Web of Science of 2,190 articles. The resulting articles had been published in 921 different journals. Figure 1 depicts the top ten journals with the highest numbers of resulting articles. The query results were loaded into the BibReview software [1] for a multi-pass review carried out separately by the two section editors (TG, WOH). Due to the high number of retrieved articles, the result set was bisected for the first pass in which ineligible articles were excluded based on their titles and/or abstracts by one section editor. All remaining articles were then assessed by both section editors based on abstracts and/or full-texts as required. The individual results of each section editor were merged after each assessment cycle. Articles which had been selected as possible candidate papers were discussed and added to a list upon mutual acceptance. Articles tagged with “pending” or “conflicting” status were jointly re-assessed in a total of three passes, yielding a list of 16 candidate best papers. This preliminary list was then reviewed by the Yearbook editors who checked if any articles had also been selected for other sections. After discussions, two papers were removed from the CIS candidate paper list because they had been nominated in other sections: a very interesting qualitative study by Cresswell and colleagues on Workarounds to hospital electronic prescribing systems [2] and an also very interesting contribution by Hravnak and colleagues on artifacts in non-invasive vital sign high-frequency data and implications for mining big data [3] but artifact in stored non-invasive vital sign (VS) (finally this paper was selected as one of the best papers for the Sensor, Signal and Imaging Informatics section).

The 14 remaining papers were then peer-reviewed by Yearbook editors and external reviewers. During the selection meeting held on April 21st 2017 in Paris, three papers were finally selected as best papers for the CIS section (Table 1). A content summary of these three best CIS papers can be found in the appendix of this synopsis.

Findings and Trends: Clinical Information Systems 2016

As in the previous years, we strived to get a comprehensive overview of the content of the retrieved papers and to check if our query was reliable and valid. Last year [4] we implemented a text mining and bibliometric network visualizing approach [5] using a freely available tool, VOSviewer [6], to summarize the content of titles and abstracts of the articles in our CIS result set. As the results were very informative, we retained the approach, but decided to conduct discrete analyses for the titles and abstracts to get a better separation of their contents. Figures 2 and 3 depict the resulting co-occurrence maps of the top-100 terms from the titles and of the most relevant terms (top 60 percent, n =354) from the abstracts of the 2,190 papers of this year’s CIS result set.

The analysis of the titles revealed six different clusters with five evident hubs (Figure 2): patient, system, use, study and analysis. The analysis of the abstracts resulted in five clusters with many similarities to the results found last year. The biggest cluster (in red on bottom right, Figure 3) dealing with the CIS core domain clinical/health information systems and electronic medical/patient/health/
personal records in all forms and flavors as well as other health-IT applications, their functionalities, requirements and challenges, including meaningful use and health information exchange amongst others, was found again. The second cluster (in green on the left, Figure 3) again contained terms related to the context of the articles (study types or designs, study population, inclusion or exclusion criteria, study objectives as well as outcomes or other relevant context factors). Another cluster (in blue on top left, Figure 3) with location-related terms (e.g. geographic information system, area, environmental factor, distance, distribution) showed up as seen in the last year. A small cluster (in pink, on bottom Figure 3) again mainly contained terms related to adverse events, their detection, reporting, and prevention.

What we could observe in more clarity than in the previous year was a very prominent cluster (in yellow, top right Figure 3) dealing with behavioral aspects in CIS usage and research (behavior, intention, perception, understanding, awareness, influence, adherence, communication).

In order to round out our overview, we conducted an additional analysis and applied a topic modelling and visualization approach [7, 8] a web-based interactive visualization of topics estimated using Latent Dirichlet Allocation that is built using a combination of R and D3. Our visualization provides a global view of the topics (and how they differ from each other to the text corpora of the papers’ abstracts. After data cleaning and preparation steps (e.g. filtering of punctuation and stop words, stemming of all words), latent topics were identified

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**Fig. 2** Clustered co-occurrence map of the most relevant terms (top-100) from the titles of the 2,190 papers in the 2017 CIS query result set. Node size corresponds to the frequency of the terms (binary count, once per paper). Edges indicate co-occurrence and distance of nodes corresponds to the association strength of the terms within the titles (only top 300 of 1,444 total edges are shown). Colors represent the six different clusters.
based on co-occurring words in the texts. These topics were then visualized and can be explored using an interactive, browser-based user interface. Figure 4 depicts a screenshot of this user-interface (for interactive exploration of the 30 most prominent topics found in the abstracts of the 2017 CIS query result set, the user interface is available at https://iig.umit.at/yearbook17).

The results of our analyses show that clinical information systems research covers a wide variety of topics. In the whole spectrum of these topics, we found a fair proportion of high quality, highly interesting, and well-written articles. Out of them, three papers highlighting aspects of particular importance for the CIS research were finally selected as best papers. The first one, a very interesting contribution by Anderson and colleagues on applying EHR phenotyping for Type 2 Diabetes mellitus prescreening [9], perfectly reflects the actual Yearbook’s special topic by demonstrating the tremendous potential impact that intelligent reuse of EHR data could bring to the public health sector.

The second of the 2017 CIS best papers is dedicated to the users of clinical
information systems and highlights the importance of the “last mile” in modern information logistics processes — data presentation and visualization [10]. Badgeley and colleagues conceptualized and implemented an extensible visualization framework to create dashboards for longitudinal health and wellness data.

The third best paper in the 2017 CIS section is one of the finest examples of comprehensive lifelong clinical information system evaluation that we have ever seen [11]. Three periods were considered corresponding to 4, 8 and over 10 years after the first CIS deployment in 2000, respectively. Hadji and colleagues remind us on the importance of taking care of system quality and user satisfaction. The introduction section of this article was one of our favorites and we would like to recommend its reading to anyone who wants to get an introduction to IT evaluation models in a nutshell.

Although not selected as best papers, the remaining eleven candidate best papers were just as much interesting. Moen and colleagues, for example, compared automatic summarization methods for clinical free text notes and demonstrated the potential feasibility of such methods [12]. Reducing information overload and redundancies would be of great practical value for actual clinical care. Perhaps we will read about successful implementations in real-world clinical settings in coming IMIA Yearbook editions. The paper from Hosseini and colleagues also contributed to this field and presented a novel prototype for continuity of care document de-duplication, consolidation, and management [13].

Bazemore and colleagues picked up an old idea from the 1940s — enrichment of health record data with external (e.g., socioeconomic or environmental) information — transformed it to current situations, and proposed a novel geocoded approach to the integration of the social determinants of health into EHRs [14]. Such an approach could be highly beneficial for patient care as well as for secondary use purposes.

However, one of the most important aspects for any secondary use purpose is data quality. Johnson and colleagues applied an ontology-based assessment process to EHR data and determined its usefulness in characterizing data quality [15].

Fig. 4 Screenshot of the user-interface for the interactive exploration of the topics found in the abstracts of the 2017 CIS section query result set (online available at https://iig.umin.at/yearbook17). In the screenshot topic number 1 — Electronic Health Record (EHR) adoption — is depicted. On the left side, the spatial distribution of the single topics is displayed on an intertopic distance map. The right side depicts the top-30 most relevant terms in the selected topic.
Conclusions and Outlook

Once more, the results of our analyses show that the clinical information system domain is multi-dimensional and very complex. It is hard to draw a well-defined outline between CIS and other domains or other sections of the IMIA Yearbook. The trends that we observed in the last years are progressing. Clinical information systems are more than just sociotechnical systems for data collection, processing, exchange, presentation, and storage. They are the backbone of a very complex, trans-institutional information logistics process.

Acknowledgements

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References


Available from: http://www.aclweb.org/anthology/W/W14/W14-3110
16. Jamieson T, Ailion J, Chien V, Mourad O. An electronic documentation system improves the quality of admission notes in a general medical unit [16]. The paper by Attaallah and colleagues [17] in contrast is representing a considered disputable because it may have just sociotechnical systems for data collection, processing, exchange, presentation, and storage. They are the backbone of a very complex, trans-institutional information logistics process.

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A “full EHR” dataset utilizing 298 features on a de-identified EHR dataset containing electronic health records (EHRs) could be achieved using phenotyping of more comprehensive pre-screening criteria. A retrospective study to determine whether a subset of known risk factors. In this paper, patients for screening currently relies on only remain undiagnosed. The selection of patients with active, untreated type 2 diabetes mellitus, DM2.

Multivariate logistic regression was used to identify patients with active, untreated type 2 diabetes mellitus. DM2.

While an increasing amount of longitudinal health data is being captured in electronic health records (EHRs), presentation is often incomplete and recorded unsystematically, it could be leveraged to cost-effectively identify patients with active, untreated, DM2 for further screening.

The EHR-based phenotypes performed significantly better than the conventional risk score, using both the logistic regression as well as the random forests model. The authors conclude that, even though EHR data is often incomplete and recorded unsystematically, it could be leveraged to cost-effectively identify patients with active, untreated, DM2 for further screening.

The authors conclude that the framework can support the rapid design and implementation of visualization dashboards, which can be applied in clinical care and research as well as teaching use cases.

Active and meaningful use as well as user satisfaction are important success factors for the continuing success of a clinical information system (CIS) implementation. In this article, Hadji et al. describe a longitudinal evaluation of these aspects at the Georges Pompidou University Hospital in France. The long observation period of 14 years provided a unique opportunity to assess the evolution of CIS acceptance during early (4 years), late (8 years), and very late (>10 years) stages of CIS use.

The authors conclude that acceptance increased over the study period. Perceived usefulness initially was lower in medical staff than in non-medical staff. While global satisfaction initially appeared to be determined by CIS use, CIS quality, and perceived usefulness, the association with CIS use disappeared over time.

The authors conclude that acceptance dimensions change significantly over time and that models should be adapted to the according phase of CIS use. They postulate that the decrease of the relationship between CIS use and satisfaction over time could be interpreted as a maturity indicator of a CIS project.