

## The Reply



We appreciate the comment in reviewing our work by Dr Reynolds.<sup>1</sup> Language is inherently dynamic, with constant addition of new definitions for existing words. Dr Reynolds points out that new words have entered our medical language and have been used for years without checkpoints or guards of such admissions. We agree that our medical community should maintain standardized language in printed literature and medical records.

In the Merriam-Webster dictionary, under the medical definition, endorse (as a verb) means “to report or note the presence of (a symptom).” An example of this use is: “He endorsed nausea without emesis and denied any associated shortness of breath.”<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, searching the MEDLINE literature database through PubMed for *endorse*, the term yielded 35,577 publications, and after adding the terms “patient,” “endorse,” and “symptoms,” the output yielded 6704 results.<sup>3,4</sup> The search goes back as early as 1975, which could reflect how the word is embedded in our daily practice—from affirming the guidelines to reporting symptoms in modern medicine. The debate might be valid. However, the use continues in other practice domains in medicine, which could imply specific meaning in psychiatric literature while reporting complaints with the shift in specific words in medical charting.<sup>5</sup>

The US federal rule mandates “Open Notes,” a federal rule known as the “Cures Rule” under the 21st Century Cures Act. This national policy requires health care providers to give patients access to all health information in their electronic medical records.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the review of the medical records resulted in a better overall experience.<sup>7</sup> However, the use of specific words since 1975 in our medical practice is now visible to our patients, which could open the door for further interpretation.

The need for a standardized medical lexicon is essential, necessitating an adaptive design to the current environment around clinical care, health policy, and the proper meaning and delivery.

**Funding:** None.

**Conflict of Interests:** None.

**Authorship:** All authors had access to the data and role in writing this manuscript.

Requests for reprints should be addressed to Ebrahim Barkoudah, MD, MPH, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, 75 Francis Street, Boston, MA, 02115.

E-mail address: [ebarkoudah@research.bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:ebarkoudah@research.bwh.harvard.edu)

Ebrahim Barkoudah, MD, MPH<sup>a</sup>  
Carson Moss, BS<sup>a</sup>

Nathan T. Connell, MD, MPH<sup>b,c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Hospital Medicine Unit and the  
Division of General Internal  
Medicine, Department of Medicine  
at Brigham and Women’s Hospital  
and Harvard Medical School,  
Boston, Mass

<sup>b</sup>Hematology Division, Department  
of Medicine, Brigham and Women’s  
Hospital, and Harvard Medical  
School, Boston, Mass

<sup>c</sup>Dana Farber Cancer Institute and  
Massachusetts General Hospital,  
Boston, Mass

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjmed.2022.11.011>

## References

1. Moss C, Patil DT, Connell NT, Zon RL, Barkoudah E. Occam’s razor for severe B12 deficiency. *Am J Med* 2022;135(7):844–7.
2. Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online. Endorse. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/endorse>. Accessed on December 7, 2022.
3. U.S. National Library of Medicine. Search for endorse. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=endorse+>. Accessed on December 7, 2022.
4. U.S. National Library of Medicine. Search for endorse, patient, and symptoms. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=patient+endorsed+symptoms>. Accessed on December 7, 2022.
5. Gillean JA, Ries R. Should the use of ‘endorse’ be endorsed in writing in psychiatry? *Current Psychiatry* 2015;14(1):e1–3.
6. Federal Register, National Archives. 21st Century Cures Act: Interoperability, Information Blocking, and the ONC Health IT Certification Program. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/05/01/2020-07419/21st-century-cures-act-interoperability-information-blocking-and-the-onc-health-it-certification>. Accessed on December 7, 2022.
7. DesRoches CM, Leveille S, Bell SK, et al. The views and experiences of clinicians sharing medical record notes with patients. *JAMA Network Open* 2020;3(3):e201753.