Comment on: "Mobile teledermatology for melanoma detection: Assessment of validity in the framework of a population-based skin cancer awareness campaign in northern Italy"

To the Editor: We read with interest the recent article by Cazzaniga et al[1] on mobile teledermatology for detecting malignant melanoma in northern Italy. We believe that this work is essential because it emphasizes the importance of mobile devices to detect melanoma in an early stage.

In our opinion, the study is not representative compared with other studies. According to the Global Cancer Statistics 2018 database (the online GLOBOCAN 2018 database is accessible at http://gco.iarc.fr/ as part of the International Agency for Research on Cancer's Global Cancer Observatory), the rate of malignant melanoma in Italy was 12.4:100,000 which is >200 times less than shown in this study.[2] Six affected of 232 individuals corresponds to a very high number of melanoma diagnosed. Is there an explanation for this significant difference?

This could be due to the inclusion of higher-risk individuals with higher rate of Fitzpatrick skin type I and II, to the low total number of individuals recruited into the study, and to regional differences. Most of the Italian population has skin type III and IV, with a lower risk to develop melanoma compared with the population of northern Europe, with a higher rate of malignant melanoma that is almost double the rate in Germany of 21.6:100,000.

We totally agree with the authors that availability of these devices with, for example, an automated algorithm for diagnosis or risk assessment could furthermore enhance accuracy, improve early detection, and reduce the waiting time and expenses for online assessment. Thank you for clarifying this point.

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