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Patient Safety during AI: A practical guide to point-of-care nurses.

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Abstract

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is finding growing applications in healthcare and nursing practice in the areas of diagnosis, clinical documentation, predictive analytics, decision support, patient monitoring and individualized care. Though AI has a significant potential in enhancing efficiency and patient outcomes, additional safety and ethical considerations arise when implementing it as well. These are algorithmic bias, flawed or misguidance results, restricted disclosure, privacy, and computer security, unjust healthcare provision, and overreliance on programmed suggestions. The nurses working in point-of-care thus need adequate AI and digital literacy to comprehend the impact of these technologies on clinical practice. Critically reviewing AI-generated information, educating nurses about the shortcomings of systems used in their organizations, patient information protection, engaging in the technology implementation process, and professional accountability are elements that should be emphasized by nurses. The use of AI should not be used to substitute nursing assessment, critical thinking, clinical judgment and compassionate patient care. Implementation of AI technology safely should eventually encompass proper education, human control, organizational regulation, and subsequent surveillance of AI technologies.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, patient safety, nursing practice, clinical decision support, predictive analytics, algorithmic bias, digital literacy, healthcare technology.

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence is a significant technological trend in contemporary healthcare. Artificial intelligence-centered systems can help healthcare providers to detect illnesses, suasion of clinical worsening, analysis of vast amounts of patient data, to aid decisions related to treatments, and customization of care. The potentials provided by these capabilities are

avenues to enhance quality, efficiency and patient outcomes of healthcare.

Meanwhile, the implementation of AI into a medical setting presents new ethical issues. Possible issues encompass biased algorithms, inaccurate advice, transparency, privacy, and confidentiality threats, cybersecurity risks, and overuse of automated machinery. These issues might

have direct consequences in terms of patient safety.

Nurses can play a crucial role in this regard since they are the ones who constantly evaluate patients, process clinical data, organize care, and react to alterations in the conditions of patients. Thus, nurses must be aware of the advantages and drawbacks of AI and make sure that the technological recommendations can be viewed in the context of the clinical setting.

1.1 Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence in a broad sense can be said to include computer technologies that can be used to execute tasks that are normally linked to human intelligence. These capabilities can consist of data learning, pattern discovery, language comprehension, image recognition, prediction and decision support.

Some of the associated technologies of AI are machine learning, deep learning, neural networks, natural language processing, and predictive analytics. Due to the speed of the advancement of such technologies, the sense and functions of AI keep changing.

With regard to healthcare, AI is as a rule a supportive technology as opposed to a replacement of healthcare professionals.

1.2 AI in Nursing and Healthcare: Applications.

The usage of AI in healthcare evolved significantly since the era of initial computer-aided clinical systems. Modern AI solutions have replaced medical imaging, clinical decision support, electronic health records, drug development, personalized treatment, patient monitoring,

documentation, and clinical outcome prediction.

One of the more established fields of AI usage is medical imaging. Deep-learning and machine-learning solutions are able to process sophisticated images and help medical specialists identify anomalies.

Big Data in the electronic health records and other clinical sources can be analyzed with the help of AI, as well. This possibility will enable healthcare organizations to detect patterns that may stand out when performed by human.

In nursing practice, AI could assist in the early-warning, clinical documentation, patient monitoring, care planning, resource allocation, and decision support. Another way that ambient AI technology is useful in documentation is by using clinical discussions and generating draft records. Nonetheless, these records must be professionally analyzed and included in the record of a patient.

2. Prescriptive Analytics in Healthcare.

Predictive analytics will be the act of making predictions based on historical and recurring data to determine the probability of things happening in the future. The electronic health records, laboratory investigations, monitoring devices, clinical documentation, and other sources provide healthcare organizations with great amounts of information. The AI is able to process such data and identify the patterns that may relate to specific clinical outcomes.

As an example, predictive systems can help clinicians recognize more at-risk patients, who are in a danger of falls, deterioration, hospital readmission, or sepsis. Early

diagnosis can help the nurses and other health care providers to intervene before severe complications arise.

Deep-learning models are especially handy to find intricate correlations in large data volumes. However, the accuracy of prediction would be greatly affected by the quality and representativeness of the input data employed to incorporate and test the model.

When an algorithm is created on incomplete, inaccurate, or unrepresentative data, such predictions might not be equally good on populations of different patients. Nurses are thus advised not to assume that the AI generated risk score is a definite clinical decision.

3. Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare: Risks.

In spite of potential advantages, AI has a number of serious patient safety risks. These are algorithmic errors, biased datasets, privacy invasion, cybersecurity threats, lack of transparency, accounting ambiguity, unsuitable implementation and automation bias.

The article utilizes the criteria presented by Sires, Rault, and Steenkamp (2019).

The AI systems are pattern learners, that is, they are informed by the data that is utilized in their creation. When such datasets are insufficient to represent specific racial, ethnic, sex, age, socioeconomic or clinical groups, the resultant system can have a different output among populations.

Historical inequalities contained within healthcare datasets can also be reproduced by algorithms. As a result, even a seemingly

objective AI recommendation might have the unintended consequence of strengthening the existing disparities.

Instead, nurses must decide whether an AI recommendation applies to that specific patient, or not, based on clinical appropriateness instead of AI-based decisions automatically deploying upon it being a computationally derived modification.

3.2 Understanding data shift and poor predictions.

AI systems can work well in the environment they were created in, but not as well as they would if a different hospital, patient population, or clinical environment were being offered.

It is also referred to as dataset shift. Algorithms can be changed based on differences in patient, equipment, clinical operation, documentation or disease prevalence.

False predictions may result in false positive and false negative. False positive can result in a false alarm of unnecessary investigation or intervention and a false negative can result in the delay in the appreciation and intervention of the actual clinical issue.

3.3 Lack of Transparency

Other sophisticated AI systems provide functionality via incredibly sophisticated computation, beyond the comprehension of their users. These systems are occasionally referred to as black-box models since healthcare workers might be presented with an answer how the recommendation was developed.

The lack of explainability may complicate the discovery of mistakes, interpretation of

the unforeseen recommendations, and issue responsibility. Nurses are thus supposed to know the intent and constraints of AI systems applied in their clinical setting and consult where there are discrepancies between the recommendations provided and clinical evidence.

3.4 Privacy and Cybersecurity

AI technologies often rely on a huge amount of vulnerable health data. It is thus crucial to keep confidentiality, data security and access appropriate.

Data security breaches can reveal sensitive data of patients or disrupt any technology-based clinical devices and systems. Nurses are expected to abide by the institutional policy related to data protection, authentication, which are computer security and fundamental use of patient data.

Patient data is not to be inputted in unauthorized AI and other systems that are not approved to be used clinically.

3.5 Excessive dependence on Artificial Intelligence.

Automation bias is another significant risk, where users are overconfident in computerized feedback.

An AI-based suggestion can seem accurate and official and yet be erroneous. Nurses must thus evaluate automated recommendations with symptoms of the patient, history, assessment results, lab-tests, medications, and others.

Professional assessment should be verified when an AI output comes into conflict with a nurse because the system needs more investigation than an automatic adoption of the suggested value.

4. Enabling Nurses to operate AI in a safe manner.

Historically, nurses have been significant players in the processes of gathering, interpreting, and using healthcare information. With the growing integration of AI into healthcare, the concept of digital competence and AI literacy becomes a significant aspect of professional nursing practice.

Digital, Artificial Intelligence Literacy.

A simple background about AI concepts and the way these technologies are used in healthcare should be formed by nurses. The concepts that should be presented as part of the educational programmes include machine learning, deep learning, predictive analytics, algorithmic bias, clinical decision support, and data privacy.

Not all nurses need to be on the level of AI literacy. Instead, nurses must have adequate knowledge on why a system is designed to perform such a task, what the system is restricted to, how to perceive its results correctly and under what situations further clinical validation is required.

Learning how to use AI Systems in the Workplace.

They need to help nurses become acquainted with AI-mediated technologies in their respective healthcare organizations. They can be early-warning systems, clinical decision-support applications, predictive models, automated documentation applications, or ambient AI applications.

The healthcare facilities are expected to present precise details on the functionality of these technologies as well as their usage,

their limits, privacy issues, and the means of reporting the mistake or unforeseen results.

Involvement with AI Implementation.

The planning, evaluation, and implementation of AI technologies should involve frontline nurses. Since nurses deal with patients directly as well as work on clinical processes, they are able to recognize practical issues, that might not be noticed during technical development.

Involvement of nursing can thus play a salient role in coming up with technologies which are clinically relevant, safe, practical and patient centred.

Continuing Professional Development

The changes in AI technologies are rapid. Continuing education, professional organizations, peer-reviewed research, institutional training, and evidence-based clinical guidance should therefore keep nurses up-to-date.

Healthcare organizations can also take the role of ensuring that they train the nurses appropriately instead of assuming that nurses will learn on their own the knowledge needed to utilize the newly implemented systems without errors.

Maintaining Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is necessary irrespective of level of technology. The AI may be used to process a great deal of information in a short period of time, but it does not substitute the fully-developed nursing diagnosis and awareness of the situation of the specific patient.

Before relying on AI-generated information to inform patient care, nurses must verify the information as important. It is advisable that recommendations are combined with clinical evidence, preferences of the patient, professional standards, and ethical considerations.

5. AI as an Aid and not a Replacement.

AI is supposed to make human decision-making better not to substitute it. Clinical reasoning and communication, empathy, advocacy, ethical judgment, cultural awareness, and individual patient needs understanding are a part of nursing.

These human facets continue to be fundamental to safe and caring nursing care.

Professional responsibility is also significant in the case of AI application. Nurses should not believe that an automated recommendation is accurate just because it was produced by a complex system. Appropriate professional judgment and organizational policies should continue to be applied in making clinical decisions.

6. Important AI-Related Terms

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Technologies created by computers that can perform tasks traditionally involving elements of human intelligence.

Algorithmic Bias: This is a systematic bias in an artificial intelligence system that may lead to untrue or unfair results of specific individuals or groups.

Big Data: Impossibly large and multidimensional data sets that may be

processed computationally with the goal of detecting patterns and trends.

Hallucination: The information generated by AI seems believable, but is false, unsubstantiated, or fake.

Machine Learning: This area within AI where algorithms find trends within data and apply them to make predictions or classifications.

Deep Learning: A highly developed of machine learning that involves the use of multilayered neural networks in the analysis of complex information.

Neural Networks: Processing structures made out of interconnected processing units, which are supposed to find patterns in the data.

Natural Language Processing (NLP): Technology allows a computer to process, analyze, and create human language.

Predictive Analytics: This implies the use of statistical and computational methods to predict a forecast of what will come coming on the basis of the present data.

Clinical Decision Support Systems: Digital clinical decision support systems assist healthcare professionals in making clinical decisions by delivering patient-specific information, alerts, or any other support to the patient.

Augmented Intelligence: This strategy focuses on the idea of using AI to enhance human abilities and work-related choices, as opposed to eliminating them.

Ambient AI: AI systems that run in the background of the clinical environment, like systems that analyze clinician-patient conversations to aid documentation.

7. Ethical Considerations

Patient safety, autonomy, privacy, fairness, transparency, accountability and elimination of harm are ethical principles that should guide the application of AI in nursing.

Even in case of automated technologies, patients should still be provided with person-centred care. Healthcare organizations are expected to set up well-defined governance mechanisms on how to specify accountability with regards to AI selection, validation, implementation, monitoring, and reporting of errors.

Special consideration is required to vulnerable groups since biased (or poorly validated) algorithms can exacerbate existing disparities in healthcare.

8. Nursing implications in the future.

The use of AI is also bound to gain momentum within the normal nursing practice. Applications in the future can be more detailed early-warning systems, automated documentation, remote patient monitoring, personal care planning, virtual nursing and AI-assisted clinical decision support.

Such a trend will necessitate adjustments in nursing training. The capabilities in the digital health, data interpretation, AI ethics, information governance, and safe technology use are competences that will be required more often by nursing students and practicing nurses.

Nevertheless, technological progress must not overshadow the human aspects of

nursing. The future of nurses is better considered a collaboration with AI that preserves human control over it instead of the leaving of the professional judgment with AI.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence can substantially assist nursing practice in terms of enhancing information analysis, clinical forecasts, documentation, medical assistance, and the efficiency of healthcare. However, AI also brings to the fore significant issues of bias and flawed predictions, transparency, privacy, cybersecurity, responsibility, and excessive trust in automated suggestions.

The nurses working in the point-of-care are instrumental in making sure that these technologies are put into safe use. The creation of AI literacy, knowledge of locally employed systems, engagement in evaluating technology, keeping abreast of existing knowledge, confidentiality of patient data, and critical review of automated outputs are all responsibilities of growing importance to nurses.

Above all, AI must be discussed as an adjunct to professional nursing judgment and not as its replacement. Human control, ethical practice, proper organizational governance, and further consideration of personal needs and safety of each patient are the key to safe AI-assisted healthcare.

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