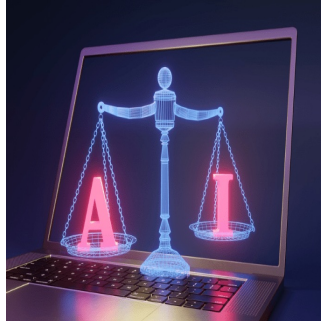## FSMB Recommendations for the Ethical Integration of AI in Healthcare

The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) released a report on the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within healthcare, recognising its potential to enhance quality, access, and efficiency while acknowledging associated ethical dilemmas. The report stresses the pivotal role of state medical boards in ensuring the ethical and effective application of AI by physicians. Key ethical principles are outlined to guide regulatory considerations, emphasising patient safety, quality care, equity, and accountability. Foundational aspects of AI, such as algorithms and machine learning, are explained, alongside examples of AI applications in healthcare, including computer vision systems and predictive analytics. The regulatory landscape for AI in healthcare is depicted as complex and evolving, urging for continued education among clinicians. The involvement of the FSMB in monitoring and influencing the AI ecosystem underscores the need for policy guidance that addresses physicians' ethical responsibilities when utilising AI in patient care. The FSMB outlined best practices to govern the use of clinical AI.

Physician Education in AI: Balancing Potential Benefits and Risks

Physicians are entrusted with maintaining their skills and knowledge to ensure safe and effective healthcare delivery. With the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into healthcare systems, it's crucial for physicians to stay informed about AI developments, understanding both its potential benefits and risks. Neglecting the potential of AI may hinder physicians from optimising patient care, while excessive reliance on AI could undermine independent clinical judgement and lead to errors. Medical education should therefore incorporate training on advanced data analytics and AI usage, ensuring physicians are equipped to navigate its complexities responsibly. Physicians are urged to participate in accredited continuing medical education programmes focused on enhancing competence in AI application, considering ethical principles and the potential impact on patient care.

Accountability Challenges in AI Implementation

State medical boards hold physicians accountable for the use of AI tools in healthcare, rather than directly regulating the tools themselves. Physicians are ultimately responsible for any harm resulting from AI use, with the level of accountability depending on the tool's risk potential and its resemblance to medical practice. Physicians should view AI as decision-support rather than replacement, understanding its design, training data, and outputs to assess reliability and mitigate bias. Accepting AI recommendations entails providing a rationale for decisions made, either following or deviating from AI guidance, ensuring documentation of rationale aligns with the standard of care. Even with complex "black box" algorithms, physicians must offer a reasonable interpretation of AI outputs. While AI aids in medical record documentation, physicians must ensure accuracy and compliance with privacy laws, as failure to do so may lead to accountability for inaccuracies and patient harm. Physicians should also ensure security measures for protecting patient health information used by AI systems.

Ensuring Informed Consent and Privacy in AI Adoption

Informed consent ensures patient autonomy in clinical decisions and privacy protection. Patients must be fully informed about diagnosis, treatment options, risks, benefits, and alternatives, including when AI is involved. Physicians are responsible for explaining diagnosis and treatment independently, engaging in meaningful dialogue and shared decision-making with patients. While AI can assist, physicians bear ultimate responsibility. Patients should consent before AI application, with physicians disclosing AI use, capabilities, limitations, and data handling. Transparency about AI's role builds trust and highlights physician competence.

Addressing Bias and Promoting Equity in AI-Driven Healthcare

Physicians have a duty to address biases in patient care, including those stemming from AI algorithms. While AI can enhance access to care, efforts are needed to ensure equitable access and prevent exacerbating existing disparities. The FSMB aims to collaborate with regulatory agencies and AI developers to establish standards for disclosing information about training data, biases, and risks. Given the potential for biassed AI to impact patient care and perpetuate healthcare disparities, collective action is warranted to understand and mitigate algorithmic bias.

Governance of AI in Healthcare: FSMB Ethical Principles

The FSMB proposes governing AI in healthcare through established ethical principles rather than attempting to regulate specific applications due to the rapid evolution of AI technology. The principles and recommendations are aimed at promoting responsible and ethical regulation of clinical care incorporating AI, including transparency and disclosure, education and understanding, responsible use and accountability, equity and access, privacy and data security, oversight and regulation, and continual review and adaptation of law and regulations. These recommendations emphasize the importance of transparency, education, responsible use, equity, privacy, oversight, and continual adaptation to ensure AI's ethical and effective integration into healthcare practice.

While AI offers substantial benefits to both patients and physicians in medical practice, it also poses significant risks if developed and used irresponsibly. It advocates for a sensible approach to AI regulation by state medical boards and its integration into practice by physicians, aiming to maximize benefits while minimizing harms. Adhering to traditional professional standards for medical care provision is highlighted as crucial for ensuring patient safety and meeting the goals of physicians and state medical boards.

Source: FSMB

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