Guiding principles for physicians recommending mobile health applications to patients

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CMA POLICY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PHYSICIANS RECOMMENDING MOBILE HEALTH APPLICATIONS TO PATIENTS

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) recognizes the importance of mobile health applications (mHealth) in improving patient care, enhancing patient perceived value, and increasing patient satisfaction. However, there are significant concerns regarding the use of mHealth applications, particularly in terms of patient privacy, data security, and the potential for misuse.

The CMA has developed the following principles to guide physicians in recommending mHealth applications to their patients:

**Background**
- The use of mHealth applications has become increasingly common, with patients and healthcare providers utilizing these tools to improve health outcomes.
- However, there are concerns regarding the potential for misuse of these applications, particularly in terms of patient privacy and data security.

**Guiding Principles**
1. **Patient Privacy:** Physicians should ensure that mHealth applications are used in a way that respects patient privacy and confidentiality.
2. **Data Security:** Physicians should ensure that mHealth applications protect patient data and comply with relevant legislation and standards.
3. **Evidence-Based Practice:** Physicians should recommend mHealth applications that are evidence-based and supported by peer-reviewed research.
4. **Patient Informed Consent:** Physicians should obtain informed consent from patients before recommending mHealth applications.

**Conclusion**
The CMA encourages physicians to use mHealth applications in a responsible and evidence-based manner, while addressing the concerns associated with patient privacy and data security.