Guiding principles for the optimal use of data analytics by physicians at the point of care

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Guiding Principles for the Optimal Use of Data Analytics by Physicians at the Point of Care

Executive Summary

Electronic health records are being used more widely in clinical care and research. A majority of physicians in Canada have implemented electronic health records (EHRs). EHRs can improve physician and patient safety and quality of care. They also facilitate the sharing of health information, which provides opportunities to enhance the use of big data approaches. By 2020, the Canadian Public Health Agency plans to implement an electronic health care infrastructure that supports the integration of health information systems across the country.

Optimal use of data analytics is having the right balance between managing the information of all patients and protecting personal privacy. CMA Guidelines for the Use of Data Analytics in Health Information Systems (HIS) identifies how best practice can be achieved in the use of big data approaches in HIS, including the following:

1. The collection and use of patient health information must be clinically justified and not for commercial purposes.
2. The confidentiality of personal health information must be protected.
3. Patients must be informed of the collection and use of their health information and provided with clear options for consent or refusal.
4. The data analytics process must be transparent and understandable.
5. The results of data analytics must be used to improve patient care and public health outcomes.

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