

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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# Ethical considerations in the use of artificial intelligence in mental health

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To the Editor,

Artificial intelligence (AI) advancements have revolutionized mental healthcare, presenting novel and practical approaches to address persistent issues. However, using AI in mental health also poses ethical implications, which cannot be ignored. This letter to the editor delves into the ethical aspects of incorporating AI in mental health, specifically concerning privacy, impartiality, transparency, responsibility, and the physician–patient bond. By exploring these ethical quandaries, we aim to facilitate a more significant comprehension of the ethical considerations in AI-powered mental healthcare and offer suggestions to guarantee AI technologies' ethical and responsible use. AI can revolutionize mental healthcare by improving diagnosis accuracy, personalizing treatment, and enhancing outcomes. It makes mental health care efficient, affordable, and accessible. Chatbots, virtual therapists, and predictive algorithms are emerging. Ethical guidelines and responsible practices are necessary to ensure that AI enhances the well-being of individuals with mental health conditions. In this letter to the editor, we suggest the following deliberations that require attention and further action:

1. Algorithmic bias is a pressing concern in mental health diagnostics and treatment: AI algorithms rely

on large datasets that can contain inherent biases, ultimately leading to disparities in diagnosis and treatment recommendations that eventually affect marginalized groups.

2. Data privacy is one of AI-driven mental healthcare's most significant ethical challenges: Unauthorized access, data breaches, and the risk of patient data being exploited for commercial purposes are all concerns that necessitate stringent safeguards [1].
3. Maintaining ethical standards in AI-driven mental healthcare: AI opacity can hinder comprehension of decision-making processes. To ensure responsible use, understanding AI operation and decision-making is crucial for patients and healthcare providers [2]. Also, accountability for AI-generated outcomes is critical in adverse events or errors.
4. AI in mental healthcare has the potential to transform the conventional doctor–patient dynamic, empowering healthcare professionals with advanced tools and capabilities. Achieving a harmonious balance between AI-driven assistance and the specialized knowledge of healthcare providers poses an ethical predicament.
5. Informed consent in healthcare: Informed consent is vital in medical ethics, giving patients the right to make informed decisions. While some argue that black-box AI systems do not impede this right [3], this letter highlights its importance in AI. Patients must be able to decline AI interventions if they have any concerns.

It is imperative to establish clear and universal ethical guidelines and policies for the use of AI in the improvement of mental health. By balancing innovation with ethics, we can ensure that AI technologies enhance the

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well-being of individuals with mental health conditions while safeguarding their privacy, dignity, and access to equitable care. Addressing these ethical concerns directly will pave the way for a future and an improved quality of life for all.

#### Abbreviation

AI Artificial intelligence

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