Review of: "Treading the Thin Line Between Health Ethics and Patient Care in the Application of Telemedicine: The Case of Sound Ethical Guidelines in Telemedicine in Sub-Saharan Africa"

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Dear authors of the paper on "Health Ethics and Patient Care in the Application of Telemedicine: The Case of Sound Ethical Guidelines in Telemedicine in Sub-Saharan Africa"!

Thank you for the opportunity to review your interesting paper in this community-based journal, a work which I definitely appreciated! The topic you raise, to establish ethical guidelines for tele-medical interventions, is of high importance in every region of the world. Subsequently, you find some points that I want to raise up and that might hopefully help you to better address what you intend in this article. Please understand my way of doing review - first, as a product of my PhD supervisor´s training, and second, as a method to help improve the work of our community.

Major issues:

1. Please make sure that you give all the relevant information for a scientific article. The article misses a **methods section**. I read in another review comment that the reviewer thought of your work as a review. If so, please state the background of your methodological procedure, such as information on literature search, screening process, description of data (PRISMA graph, for instance), and on the analysis of data. I was wondering if you did a document analysis of policy papers, a research project, or a summary of several data reports in different countries?

I would further add a sentence at the end of the introduction, "At the end of this paper, we will come to an understanding of….", that again gives detailed information about what your paper precisely is about.

2. The first point also corresponds with the way you **structure** your abstract. May I offer you a suggestion? I would leave out the first sentence and take the next four sentences as an introduction/background. The next sentence I would modulate into a research question or study purpose (it starts with "However, …"). Afterwards, please add a sentence on the methods used and one or two sentences for results. Is the last sentence of the abstract your conclusion?

There is no need to write headlines for the individual chapters explicitly; think of it rather as a grid for re-thinking your abstract.

3. Thank you for the chapter '**The current state of Telemedicine in SSA**' – it is very important to know more about SSA

as a geographical region, as it includes dozens of countries. It would also be interesting to know even more, for instance about health care access and the relation between traditional health care and telemedicine (for the latter throughout the paper).

In detail: in the second line of the first paragraph, you talk about "the continent" – is SSA a continent?

In the next sentence, you cite a review; please add the quote accordingly. And in the following sentence, you say "Only eight countries…" – my question would be eight of how many?

Are there any more national data you could present? I am very interested to know more about the status of telemedicine in SSA!

Others:

1. Please, specify the term **Telemedicine as an umbrella term** and what purposes it can be used for in one paragraph. It might help you to structure the introduction. In the current version of the paper, you use many different terms: Telemedicine, digital health, digital exchange of health information, wearables, AI (which you only use at the very end of the text, in the conclusion). You can do so (using different terms), but please specify what they mean, how they relate to each other, and what they do for the purpose of your paper?

2. I really like that you also mention the aspect of negative health outcomes associated with the use of telemedicine.

3. Please make sure that the list of references represents the literature you use in the text. Haddad & Geiger (2022), cited on page 4, I could not find in the reference list, for instance.

4. Last sentence of the first paragraph: I am sure that you can find some more reasons why implementing telehealth is a good thing - please, especially think of minorities, differences in internet access rates, and so on.

5. The first paragraph on page 5 might be improved by checking for readability.

I am also ready to read your revised paper again if you want me to do so. Thank you again for your very interesting topic and paper!

Best regards from Vienna!

Susanne