

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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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a very interesting article, emphasizing both the benefit of technology and the risks that may arise due to its use. I have very few comments and suggestions about the manuscript. 1. The authors could remove the words 'despite location' from the abstract and change the word 'leaking' to 'unknowingly exposing'. I would think that patients, whoever they may be, are acting without awareness of protecting their information. 2. Under the background, it would be good if the authors could give some recent statistics on TM use, globally and in the African context. You may also provide the types of TM technologies used, for instance, mHealth, etc. 3. The need for the study is coming very abruptly. (OK, these were provided but should come earlier.) Could you kindly describe the unethical use of TM that has occurred during the pandemic or at any other times, which will then give you the premise to state the need for the study with confidence? 4. This sentence is not clear: 'However, African countries face similar barriers to TM adoption, including infrastructural, technological, organisational, financial, cultural, policy, and regulatory obstacles.' Refresh. 5. Are there any gaps you have identified in the current ethical standards that have failed under digital health? How about other governments' laws that protect individuals from scrupulous people? I think you should describe these somewhere besides the known ethics presented. 6. Describe if there are any ethical standards for the use of mHealth and other technologies in health care. 7. How the author is relating the ethics described and the use of digital health is not coming out clearly - a lot of physical interaction seems to take precedence in this paper. Describe how patient-doctor information is protected, stored, used, shared, etc. Most ethical challenges are in these areas. Lastly, I advise that the author should read more literature on ethics in the area of ITC and digital health. Further, ethics in data consenting, data collection, data sharing, storage, use, etc., to improve the breadth of ethical issues surrounding health technologies.