

Ethical and legal issues related to the use of computer programs in clinical medicine.

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Ethical and Legal Issues Related to the Use of Computer Programs in Clinical Medicine

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FULL TEXT



Abstract

As computer programs are used with increasing frequency in the clinical setting, ethicists, lawyers, computer scientists, clinicians, and patients must confront a group of problems: In what situations is it appropriate to use a medical computer program? Who should use these programs and how should they be used? What is the legal status of a computer program that provides medical advice? Can a proper balance be achieved between confidentiality of patient information and shared access to records by health care personnel? How can regulatory agencies, physicians, and patients determine if a program is safe for human use? Will programs be able to communicate with users well enough to prevent clinically harmful misunderstandings? Because few if any definitive answers are yet available,

these questions remain the subject of much discussion.

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