**Healthcare and Smartphone Use**

**Introduction**

The advancement of technology in the health sector has engendered important strides in the provision of health care services. The service delivery in the health care sector is a focal point requiring the inculcation of concepts and knowledge of technology in the delivery of services (Al Thomairy et al., 2015). The development of technology and novelty is essential in snowballing provision of quality care for the society. The technological gadgets  necessitates ample access to quality and accurate information about the patient by providing clinical procedures, digitized treatment programs, and an efficient record keeping (McBride & LeVasseur, 2017). The system provides hint that can bolster the quality of clinical decisions made by nurses and other healthcare practitioners. Notably, the internet and technological gadgets offer rich information with access to up to date evidence that help patients and health practitioners manage health issues when used appropriately, but they can become a mess when misused.

The application of smartphones within the healthcare delivery setting creates distraction in case the user is not considerate of others. Indeed, they become a barrier to efficient delivery of services (Oh, Yeon, Ens & Mannion, 2017). The scenario described in this context represents the consequences of using a smartphone to take photographs with a patient by a nurse. This case shows an infringement of a patient privacy and sharing the information with the public without his consent. This paper will describe the above scenario in relation to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that purposes to provide privacy and security for medical data (Farrell, 2016). The discussion of the HIPAA, legal, and regulation will offer the foundation for arresting the situation under scrutiny and making recommendation. There will also a critical focus of the merits and demerits of the use of smartphones in hospitals.

**HIPAA, Legal, and Regulation Discussion**

The HIPAA regulations deal with the violation of the right to secrecy of a patient by the nurse. The law stipulates that health practitioners must always conceal the identity of their clients and maintain their privacy (Farrell, 2016). Therefore, there is a violation of the HIPAA regulations concerning the right of a patient where the nurse takes photos without consulting Jarod. The selling of the photos in the next morning make the matter worse as it fails to address personal autonomy of the patient. According to Ventol (2014), the nurses may lose their practicing permit because they have failed to abide with their oath and seeking for informed consent of a patient before getting into his privacy. The conduct of the two health practitioners falls below the agreed rules for competent health workers making them deserve legal action for their unethical behavior.

There are policies apart from the HIPAA that would apply in this case analysis. The Common Rule is one of the regulation governing the use of smartphones in the workplace. The Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects stipulates that individuals must have consent and they must have a guarantee of their privacy when under treatment (Arora, Yttri & Nilsen, 2014). Therefore, the rule would apply in this scenario because there is bleaching of the privacy of Jerod without his .consent by the nurses. Another important law that would come into play in this scenario is the 42 code of federal regulations II. The law also pertains to the privacy of the patients especially those under the influence of alcohol (Arora, Yttri & Nilsen, 2014). It also inhibits the disclosure of research participant’s identity in reports and publications. Therefore, Jarod is a participant in a clinical process and his disclosure to the media would drive investigators to apply the rule against the the nurses.

**Scenario Ending and Recommendation**

The scenario ending appropriate for the case study is the second part that I received a call from the Gossip Gazette offering $20000 for the photos. Notably, there is a promise that my identity will remain concealed after selling the photos to them. Moreover, I am desperately in need of money to buy a car and settle some remaining bills. According to the Common Rule, nurses must ensure that they keep the secrecy of their patients at all times (Arora, Yttri & Nilsen, 2014). However, I am in a predicament because I have to choose between keeping my professionalism and making money out of an illegal deal and satisfy my needs. Indeed, the problem here appears to be the remuneration of nurses. Therefore, it becomes important for the government and nursing leaders to effect a salary that will help nurses and health practitioners earn amount that will help sustain their lives.

The failure to address and pay the bills tempts me into agreeing the deal where I would make my life comfortable at the expense of the patient privacy. It the nurse receive good pay, they will never contemplate on engaging in unethical behavior. Moreover, patients and nurses should not have the opportunity to enter their wardrooms with their gadgets, but instead, they should be booked at the reception upon admittance (Ventola, 2014). If there were no smartphone to take the photos, the scenario could not have arose in the first place. Therefore, the smartphone use policy for health workers addressing issues highlighted in the case study will help reduce or mitigate the risks presented in this situation (Al Thomairy et al., 2015). Policies such as the creation of specific time and location of mobile use among nurses would ensure that such cases would never arise in the future.

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Smartphones in Hospitals**

Application of smartphones in the healthcare sector has transformed the clinical care aspects. Indeed, mobile phones have become common among clinicians while in their line of duty. In the words of Al Thomairy et al. (2015), the use of mobile application to store health information enables practitioners to improve their service delivery. The use of these applications implies that clinicians use little time to retrieve information and hasten the delivery of care to their clients. The smartphones can also store health reads and make it easy to retrieve the evidence upon the need. Smartphones have the ability to enhance the point-of-care treatment. Health practitioners can walk with the gadgets to their clients, make faster diagnosis, and communicate with the others and safe a situation before it is late (Przybylo et al., 2014). Smartphones enhance learning and communication within the nursing profession. For instance, a nurse can use a smartphone to communicate with another nurse while attending a remote patient who could not afford get to the hospital through diagnostic images taken by the phone.

However, there a negative concerns over the use of smartphones by nurses and health practitioners. Notably, smartphones have the ability to take much information and the nurses may use them to compromise their colleagues or patient privacy (Przybylo et al., 2014). The illustration is evident from the case presented in this paper. Besides, the use of smartphone in the work setting by the nurse outside the intended purpose may have far-reaching effect on the health outcomes (Ventola, 2014). For instance, the operation of a mobile phone may disrupt the attention of a surgeon during surgery affecting the safety of the patient. It becomes essential for health practitioners to ensure that they stick to the intended use of smartphones during their practice to ensure that there is no compromise of treatment results.

**Conclusion**

The use of technology has improved information systems in the health sector. The increasing use of technological gadgets by health practitioners has skyrocketed the delivery of health care. Indeed, there is an improvement in disease surveillance and unprecedented simplification of medical decision making thanks to the use of technology. Often, gadgets such as smartphones can help care providers make sound diagnostic judgments. The use of technology to analyze health data helps make rapid recognition and response in case of an emergence of a disease within a community. The use of smartphones is imperative in improving decision making within the health care sector. The devices can augment health outcomes and patients satisfaction. However, use of electronic gadgets in the healthcare sector requires critical focus and observance of the legal and ethical consideration for protecting patients’ rights.

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