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Title

Patient Perspectives on AI-Generated Physician Electronic Communication

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Background

The implementation of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in electronic communications between physicians and their patients is increasing. Prior studies have examined GenAI's ability to provide medically accurate information and its effect on physician workload. There is less research on patient perspectives of GenAI messages.

Objective

Our aim was to evaluate patient sentiment towards AI and to assess their satisfaction with GenAI messages.

Data and Methods

Single center, cross-sectional study using a Qualtrics survey. Subjects were presented with four interactions they previously had with their physician (message sent and reply received), two of which used GenAI and two that did not. Subjects were also assessed with the AIAS-4 AI attitude scale to assess general perspective on AI.

The survey consisted of Likert scale questions that assessed the perceived accuracy, clarity, empathy, and overall satisfaction with the presented interactions. Subjects were not informed which interactions used GenAI.

Results

We received 55 responses. There was no significant difference in any measure between messages that used GenAI and those that did not.

Conclusions and Implications

It was surprising to find no difference in patient satisfaction, in spite of strong negative feelings towards AI expressed in the free-response portion of the survey. Future development/implementation of GenAI must be approached with caution and with patient-physician trust in mind.