We can, but dare we

Author name

Affiliations

**Introduction**

Health care professionals are using technology to get assistance in numerous important tasks (Watkins, Goudge, Gómez-Olivé, & Griffiths, 2018). The use of smartphones assist in information and time management; maintenance and access of health records, patient management; clinical decision-making; as well as in medical education and training (Ventola, 2014). Likewise, the use of social networking sites in health care links to doctors and patients globally. This approach is being used to increase awareness and collaboration. However, with all these advantages, there are also certain ethical, professional and legal issues related to the use of this technology in health care settings. To address all these issues HIPPA has introduced different legal and other regulatory requirements. This paper will discuss a violation of use of social media and technology scenario in healthcare settings in relation to HIPPA to analyze privacy concerns, technology, legal and ethical issues. There is also discussion about different advantages and disadvantages of using smartphones and social media in healthcare.

D**iscussion**

 I being the nurse was working yesterday in the emergency room on Friday 7 pm to 7 am a shift. I had an evening filled with drunken belligerent teens, walling babies falls, fractures and regular congestive heart failure (CHF) patients. In order to perform my duties, I was missing a concert that my best friend was attending. I was getting jealous and frustrated with this and considering it torture. During the shift, at 2 a.m I got know about incoming motor vehicle accident victim. Instead of making necessary arrangements for the patient I opted to have rest. The patient arrived in 5 minutes and medics got me in. The patient was a 28-year-old male and was unconscious. When I focused on the patient, I got know that he was a lead singer of the band whose concert I missed that night. In excitement, I texted my friend about the singer and she asked for proof. I thought celebrities are public property so I captured pictures and shared with my friend. Moreover, I also for the sake of good measure captured some more pictures during different stages of his undressing. I also took his home address, phone number and other demographic information from his electronic health record. Then after the patient assessment, I went home. I was so tired and after taking rest I signed in my Facebook and shared my story of last night. I was not repenting more for missing the concert as I met the singer and got his number. Then I posted his picture on Facebook and Instagram.

This scenario is the violation of HIPPA privacy rules, which are national standards that protect patient's medical records and other personal health information. The rules not only necessitates suitable safeguards for the protection of personal health information but these also establish limits and conditions on the uses as well as to disclosures of personal health information. Besides, the rules also equip patients with rights about their health information. Here, there is a violation of HIPPA privacy rules and patient personal information is shared at social media sites. HIPPA requires not to post any protected health information on social media websites as well as not to share PHI that can also include photographs and videos of patients via messaging apps. There must be a prior authorization from a patient for such sharing (Hao & Gao, 2017). Otherwise, a nurse is obligated to protect confidential information. Moreover, the information can only be shared with the health care team with an aim to provide care for the patient. For this act, there are criminal penalties and the incident will be reported to law enforcement. They will carry out different investigations and this violation complaint will be forwarded to the Department of Justice for criminal penalties. They can either impose fine or imprison her. Here, all the penalties are through HIPPA and there is no private reason for action in HIPAA. In addition, here ethical standards have also been violated. The patient was unconscious and did not know about picture capturing and sharing. Although he was a celebrity it was the ethical duty of the nurse to not capture photographs and share them with her friend. Now, the nurse can remove pictures from social media sites and make an apology from the patient.

**Advantages and disadvantages of using smartphones and social media in healthcare**

The use of technology in healthcare not only improve doctor-patient interaction and care for patients but also reduce costs. Smartphones and social media are extensively been used in healthcare as a technology. They have been used for the treatment and care of patients as well as for the monitoring and compliance with a healthy lifestyle. These also encourage doctors to cooperate and have faster communication for different health services. The use of cloud-based storage systems enhances collaboration and files sharing on mobile devices. Doctors share health information at social media, discuss health practice matters and communicate with the public in order to encourage basic health care behaviors. Similarly, patients can also contribute to virtual seminars and receive healthcare support. Doctors can also trail their personal physical advancement through social media. In addition, this efficient communication medium can be used for education and training purposes. For example, if nurses are working in rural areas then they can use social media websites to remain up to date despite substantial geographical distance.

However, the use of social media and smartphones can bring certain disadvantages related to privacy and confidentiality. Healthcare professionals must keep in mind professional and ethical principles for the appropriate use of this technology in order to escape from any harm. Healthcare professionals can intentionally or inadvertently violate patients' privacy. They may post their different information at social sites or they can comment about patients in a humiliating way. The other disadvantage is the non-reliability of information at social media. Social media can play an effective role in the education and training of patients as well as doctors. But not every information at social media site can be reliable which limits the use of social media in health care. In addition, the use of social media by a health care professional can distract and interrupt them during working time. This distraction can become the source of errors in medication.

**Conclusion**

Modern electronic technologies are fast and remote and are extensively used in healthcare settings. They are changing the manners in which people can access and share information. People can benefit from social media and get connected to healthcare information. Professional can also connect with each other and enhance their well-timed communication with patients and family members. They can also connect with their friends and peers for support and information sharing. However, nurses may violate different ethical and privacy concerns and face serious consequences. Breaches of patient confidentiality or privacy can be planned or unintended and can take place in numerous ways. Nurses may breach confidentiality or privacy by posting information via social media sites (Hao & Gao, 2017). To avoid this situation, they are required to comply with HIPAA regulations. In this way, they will not indulge in any data breach and will relish the personal and professional benefits of social media. Therefore, healthcare professionals are required to acquaint themselves with HIPPA guidelines and policies about the use of social media.

References

Hao, J., & Gao, B. (2017). Advantages and disadvantages for nurses using social media. *Of*, *3*, 2.

Ventola, C. L. (2014). Mobile devices and apps for health care professionals: uses and benefits. *Pharmacy and Therapeutics*, *39*(5), 356.

Watkins, J. O. T. A., Goudge, J., Gómez-Olivé, F. X., & Griffiths, F. (2018). Mobile phone use among patients and health workers to enhance primary healthcare: A qualitative study in rural South Africa. *Social Science & Medicine*, *198*, 139–147.