

PRESCRIPTION CONTROLLED BY AI?

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Prescribing drugs has financial and quality implications for the healthcare system

On average, a physician prescribes almost €750,000 worth of medication per year, with wide disparities between practitioners. Moreover, in France, 75% of office visits are followed by a prescription, against 50% in Germany. Providing financial incentives for prescribing with quality rather than quantity with the same level and relevance of care would allow to reduce healthcare systems' expenditures as well as reward professionals who adopt such an approach.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) guarantees the relevance of prescriptions and reduces errors

Beyond over-prescribing, the issue of appropriate prescriptions arises. Prescribing physicians must ensure that drugs are compatible with each other and that their dosage and direction of use is appropriate for the patient's profile. This verification can take up to 30 minutes when a patient is being treated with a dozen drugs, and it represents a significant risk of errors. In Europe, almost 200,000 citizens die every year due to incorrect drug prescriptions, while a verification could prevent half of these cases.

In response to this challenge, Posos, which is a prescription application for doctors, can carry out this drug review in just a few seconds. Thanks to AI, it can also suggest a new and more relevant prescription. The application's integrated transcription tool also helps practitioners save time and avoid mistakes when admitting or discharging patients.

AI as a prescription assistant will also free up medical time

In a context of physicians' shortage, AI could allow practitioners to focus again on their core competency by assisting them in the prescription process. AI is already widely used in the field of medical devices for patients. For example, AI-driven tools can prescribe and deliver insulin directly via blood glucose meters and insulin pumps.

AI can also assist general practitioners by advising them on suspected illnesses, such as diabetes or cardiovascular diseases through patients profiling and according to the available data (risk prevalence, health records, etc.). Redirecting patients to other specialties will also be eased.

AI in healthcare needs to be assessed to determine the potential reimbursement

Although AI-driven medical devices intended for patients are correctly evaluated and reimbursed by the health insurance system, this is not the case yet for those intended for healthcare professionals or institutions. In fact, 60% of software programs purchased by healthcare professionals are not neutrally evaluated. And yet, these tools are partially reimbursed by the French National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM) through a flat rate capitation, whether they bring benefits (time, money, quality, comfort) to the healthcare professional or not.

It is therefore essential to demonstrate the relevance of these devices through a neutral evaluation. While the CNAM cannot be both the assessor and the payer, the French National Authority for Health (HAS) lacks the expertise to evaluate medical devices for professionals. A scientific community must therefore be identified for assessing the relevance of such devices.

In addition, reimbursement of devices by the CNAM should mainly come into play when the laws of the market do not apply. For example, consider a software that reduces the number of readmissions. Although this tool represents a significant gain for the healthcare system, it would not bring any direct benefit to the buyer, i.e., the healthcare institution. In such circumstances, the CNAM should decide on the reimbursement if the purchase is relevant.

The use of new technologies involves adaptations in the healthcare system

AI requires to completely reconsider and rethink the way the healthcare system is currently organized. Thanks to AI, collected data can be analyzed in real time. Thus, healthcare would no longer be solely a medical issue discussed in a doctor's office or hospital, but a global subject incorporated into everyone's daily life. However, achieving this goal requires facilitating the marketing authorization and reimbursement processes for AI-based devices.