Possible Ethical and Legal Implications and the Framework for Current and Future Regulation Issues

Benedita Gonçalves, Hugo Torgo

October 2024

1 Ethical Implications

- Patient Privacy and Data Confidentiality:
  - The LIDC-IDRI dataset includes anonymized medical data. It is critical to ensure secure storage and handling to prevent re-identification and protect patient privacy.
- Informed Consent:
  - Ensuring that patients gave informed consent for the use of their data in research is important. While the dataset is publicly available, ethical concerns arise if proper consent procedures were not followed.
- Bias and Fairness:
  - There is always a risk that an AI model may exhibit bias, especially if certain demographic groups are underrepresented in the data. Therefore, ensuring fairness across all patient groups is essential to prevent harmful misdiagnosis.
- Model Interpretability:
  - Healthcare professionals need to be able to understand and trust decisions. Therefore, is essential that AI models, used in a medical setting, are able to provide interpretable results.

2 Legal Implications

- Data Protection Laws (GDPR/HIPAA):
  - Although the dataset is anonymized, the patient data will still be required to adhere to regulations such as GDPR[1] and HIPAA[2].
- Medical Device Regulation:
  - When AI is used for clinical diagnosis, it's subject to medical device regulations, such as MDR[3] and FDA. Where it will go through testing and certification before clinical deployment.

3 Framework for Current and Future Regulation

- Current Regulatory Frameworks:
  - Existing laws like GDPR and HIPAA provide a foundation for data privacy, while the FDA and EMA oversee medical device regulations. Any AI system used for diagnostics must meet stringent validation and safety standards.
- Future Challenges:
  - As AI usage in healthcare increases, new regulations arise. Such as the European AI Act, in which it classifies AI as a high-risk system. Frameworks like these aim to ensure fairness, safety, and accountability

References

[1] GDPR: https://gdpr.eu

[2] HIPAA: https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/

[3] MDR: https://ec.europa.eu/health/mdr

[4] Jose Arimateia Batista Araujo-Filho et al. (2022), "Radiogenomics in Personalized Management of Lung Cancer Patients: Where Are We?"

[5] Causey et al. (2018), "Highly Accurate Model for Prediction of Lung Nodule Malignancy with CT Scans."