Nursing informatics, ethics and decisions: implications for translational research

Kaltoft, Mette Kjer ; Nielsen, Jesper Bo; Dowie, Jack

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Objective: To introduce, in the multi-disciplinary contexts of clinical decision making and policy formation, a theory-based decision-analytic framework for the transparent forward translation of research into practice, simultaneously identifying and communicating the need for backward translation from practice to research.

Methods: Web-based decision analytic software$^5$ is used to demonstrate how the weights for what matters, i.e. person/patient-important criteria, can be combined, using the same 0-1 scale, in an expected value calculation, with evidence-based ratings for option performance on those criteria to produce a preference-sensitive opinion.

Results: The MCDA/Annalisa framework$^5,9$ combines Nursing Informatics and Nursing Ethics (left below) in the clinical context of a nurse’s decision to disclose or not information to a near relative (six criteria$^7$: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, justice, veracity, confidentiality). For a mini-HTA (right example) it was used in a systematic review on whether to invest in nurse handheld computers (chosen criteria are related to the patient (effectiveness, safety, satisfaction, Quality of Life), organization (staff and work environment, internal - and external communication and relationships) and economy (start-up costs, financial implications, externalities).