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**Does the “Deterioration Index” Harm Patients?**

Should machines control patient care? The **Deterioration Index**, a mysterious clinical prediction tool popped up on medical charts in many hospitals during the pandemic. The algorithm-based index is “designed to help physicians decide when to move a patient into or out of intensive care.” Doctors fear it could be used to decide who gets care and who does not.

Unlike previous algorithms, the Index has not undergone peer review or been independently validated. Two physicians have expressed concern about built-in biases. However, Epic, the large electronic health record company that built it, won’t let anyone review the underlying equations being used to determine a patient’s condition. The doctors worry that physicians will lose the ability to hone their clinical skills and that patients will be harmed.

“How a largely untested AI algorithm crept into hundreds of hospitals,” Vishal Khetpal and Nishant Shah, Fast Company, May 28, 2021:  