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The ethical risks associated with RFID implants are rooted in the social and technological contexts of their current and future uses in healthcare. Medical risks to patients might result from the implants or the insertion of them. However, the more significant risks of RFID implant technologies rest in the current modes of implementation in healthcare and the for-profit model of the VeriChip Corporation (now rebranding itself as “Health Link”). We argue that the primary ethical problems emerging from RFID implants can be traced to the commercial and consumer model that has dictated the design of the VeriMed/Health Link system and the ways in which medical providers perceive it. Specifically, we discuss the robustness of the VeriMed health record, serious problems with informed consent, and exacerbation of existing social inequalities.

References

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