Neurotechnology industry partnerships and patient experiences: Findings from interviews with neurotechnology researchers

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Background
Partnerships between industry and academic medicine are critical for developing and advancing innovative neurotechnologies to treat patients. These partnerships raise ethical concerns that have tangible implications for patient experiences, well-being, and outcomes resulting from neurotechnology research and clinical treatments.

Methodology
In-depth interviews of 30 Neurotech researchers:
14 Industry relationship (IR)
16 No industry relationship (NIR)

We report on themes from qualitative analysis focused on patient experiences.

Responsibility to patients
"...the two depression trials...were halted because of futility analysis, How do you continue to fund these trials?...How do you ultimately help these patients who are very sick and identify those that are going to benefit the most from this potential treatment?" (IR.002)

Patient safety and pain management
"We had a patient...he was on hold with the company when his battery ran out for something like three days or something. When the battery runs out, this is a pain patient, so he went from zero pain to excruciating pain. Then they put him on a...hold line for hours. That's crazy." (NIR.008)

Inconvenience and cost to patients
"On [the patients'] end, we keep hearing, "How much is it gonna be? Is it gonna be more than what I currently pay?...I wish I could have it, but if it means that it's gonna cost this much, I won't get it. I'm sorry." That's one of the major things we hear." (NIR.014)

Patient privacy
"If you have brain imaging...it takes a long process to deidentify [brain data], and sometimes we don't know what may be identifiable." (NIR.011)

References