

Key Messages

Responsible AI Use Is the Foundation of California's Health Care Future

Artificial intelligence (AI) doesn't replace human judgment — it supports clinicians, improves patient safety, and enhances care delivery.

- Health care providers ensure that clinicians are involved every step of the way and do not deploy AI to make care decisions. Accountability and expertise are preserved, and clinicians retain oversight and responsibility. AI assists clinicians, but it does not supersede their decision-making.
- For example, when AI-powered ambient scribes are used to draft clinical notes from patient-clinician conversations, physicians must review and sign every AI-drafted note; in other instances, nurses must validate documents like AI-generated shift summaries. AI is used to alleviate workload, not replace clinicians.

AI improves patient care, helps address workforce shortages, and reduces burnout.

- Predictive tools support earlier intervention, including fewer unexpected intensive care unit transfers, and better outcomes; some systems are even credited with saving hundreds of lives annually. Some of the tools include:
 - Early sepsis detection
 - Stroke identification and triage
 - Medication safety
 - Cancer screening
 - Deterioration prediction
 - Readmission risk reduction
- AI's promise extends beyond clinical outcomes to patient experience. For instance, language and literacy tools help reduce communication barriers for patients with limited English proficiency. AI-powered ambient scribes draft clinical notes from patient-clinician conversations, reducing documentation time and allowing physicians and nurses to spend more time with patients. Patients want their doctors and nurses to look at them rather than screens — one California health system reports that more than 95% of its patients consent to use of AI scribes when asked, and many say they appreciate the increased attention from their providers.
- The support that AI tools offer clinicians could be a way to mitigate the physician shortages that experts project will worsen significantly over the next decade.

Hospitals deploy AI cautiously, with strong governance, transparency, and human accountability.

- AI tools and systems have been used successfully in health care for many years — from basic medication safety alerts to well-established clinical scoring tools. In 2024, 71% of hospitals nationwide reported using predictive AI integrated with electronic health records.
- AI tools undergo a formal review process involving clinical leaders, privacy, security, compliance, legal, and informatics experts before deployment. The tools are tested in real-world settings before activation and continuously monitored for safety, accuracy, bias, and performance. Underperforming tools are paused or deactivated and only redeployed if improvements meet established standards.
- Hospitals require HIPAA-compliant data protections, ongoing workforce training, clinician oversight, and equity reviews to ensure AI does not worsen disparities in health outcomes.