Ethics and Strategy: Managing AI in Healthcare for a Resilient, Innovative Future

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Key Takeaways

This presentation seeks to provide some key insights in four key areas

DEVELOP AN AI GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

LEARN HOW TO MINIMIZE BIAS AND RISK

BALANCE INNOVATION AND TRUST

PROVIDE CASE STUDIES

AI may outshine us in empathy and efficiency, but without ethics, it cannot outlast us in trust.

Physicians Vs AI Chatbots: A Case Study

- Comparing Physician and Artficial Intellegence Chatbot Responses to Patient Questions Posted to a Public Social Media Forum (JAMA Internal Medicine, 183(6), 589-596), 2023

Study Overview

- Asked the question: Can AI Chatbots potentially aid in creating answers to the patients' questions by drafting responses that could be reviewed by clinicians
- Chatbots (Using ChatGPT) & physicians crafted responses then reviewers evaluated them

Results

- 78.6% of the evaluators prefered chatbot responses above physician responses.
  - Chatbot responses were longer and higher quality
  - Chatbot responses were also rated more empathetic than physician responses

The Ethical Imperative

Every Move with AI Should Start With Ethics

Transparency

If people don’t understand how AI reaches conclusions, they won’t trust it. Worse, they will blindly trust it

Accountability

AI supports decisions, but it does not replace clinical judgement. Leadership must define who is responsible when things go wrong

Bias Mitigation

Data always carries bias. Our role is to recognize it and reduce harm through continuous testing and auditing

Patient Atonomy and Trust

AI should enhance, not replace, informed consent, shared decision making and patient dignity

Failure vs Success

Just because it works, does not mean that it follows ethical principles

Failure: Population Health Risk Algorithm

What Happened:

- Algorithm used future healthcare cost as a proxy for patient need

Outcome:

- At the same risk score, black patients were significantly sicker than white patients
  - The algorithm only flagged **17.7%** of high-need black patients, vs **46.6** if the risk was illness based

Ethical Breakdown

- **Transparency:** Hidden target variable (cost) obscured inequities
- **Accountability:** No governance caught proxy issue before scaling
- **Bias Mitigation:** No subgroup audits led to systemic algorithm racial bias
- **Trust:** Undermined equitable access to care

Reference:

- Obermeyer, Z., Powers, B., Vogeli, C., & Mullainathan, S. (2019). Dissecting racial bias in an algorithm used to manage the health of populations. Science (New York, N.Y.), 366(6464), 447–453. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aax2342

Failure vs Success

Just because it works, does not mean that it follows ethical principles

Success: Viz.ai Stroke Triage (LVO Detection)

What Happened:

- AI Platform for stroke triage identification for Large Vessel occlusions (LVOs) and alerted stroke team in real time

Outcome:

- At once center, **door-to-groin time dropped 39% off-hours** and **32% overall**, accelerating lifesaving treatment

Ethical Breakdown

- **Transparency:** Clear workflow metrics (time to treatment)
- **Accountability:** Clinicians remained decision-makers; AI served as a communication tool
- **Bias Mitigation:** Monitored process times across direct vs transfer patients
- **Trust:** Improved outcomes strenghtened both patient and provider confidence

Reference:

- Figurelle, M. E., Meyer, D. M., Perrinez, E. S., Paulson, D., Pannell, J. S., Santiago-Dieppa, D. R., Khalessi, A. A., Bolar, D. S., Bykowski, J., & Meyer, B. C. (2023). Viz.ai Implementation of Stroke Augmented Intelligence and Communications Platform to Improve Indicators and Outcomes for a Comprehensive Stroke Center and Network. AJNR. American journal of neuroradiology, 44(1), 47–53. https://doi.org/10.3174/ajnr.A7716

AI Governance



What is AI Governance?

Ethics are the why, Governance is the how



Governance Structures: Who’s at the Table?



Oversight Committee

Cross-functional team with representation from clinical, supply chain/value analysis, IT, compliance, and leadership



Defined Roles

Clear accountability for approving AI tools, monitoring outcomes, and reporting back to leadership.



Leadership Accountability

Executive sponsor ensures AI governance has visibility and authority at the highest level of the organization.

Governance in Action: Policies & Processes

How do we practically win when it comes to governance and not simply create another committee



Policies:

Define consistent criteria for adopting AI covering ethics, patient impact, and ROI.



Insdustry Partner Assessments

Require industry partners to provide transparency, bias testing, and ongoing support.



Audits

Establish regular reviews of AI tools to monitor performance and fairness over time

Tools to Support AI Governance

Put Theory Into Practice



AI Implementation Checklist

Use a stepwise framework to guide adoption through objectives, cross-fuctional teams, guardrails, training and scaling



Risk Assessment Matrix

Use a structures scoring system across all domains



AI Position Statements and Toolkits

Align your procedures with foundational frameworks from accepted documents and tools

Balancing Innovation and Trust

How To Drive Progress Without Losing People Along The Way

Encourage Innovation

Be curious and willing to evaluate AI through pilot programs and safe testing environments



Build Trust

Transparency with patients, clinical staff, physicians, administrators and the public

Maintain Accountability

Establish governance and encourage participation as well as celebrating wins and acknowledging shortfalls. Ensure rapid identification of issues and address risk quickly

Making it Real

Starter Questions for you to ask your industry partner

What to ask your Industry Partner?

- Can you explain how the AI works in plain language?
- What data was it trained on, and is it representitive of my patient population?
- How do you test it for bias, and can you share the results?
- What happens if the AI fails or drifts – who is accountable?
- How will you support ongoing monitoring and updates?

Making it Real

Monday Morning To Do List

What can you do Monday Morning?

- Form an AI Governance Working Group
  - Include IT, VA, Clinical, Compliance, etc
- Review current AI tools/industry partners for bias, transparency, and accountability
- Introduce an AI Implementation Checklist to Standardize Adoption
- Education your teams with a 30 minute AI Ethics Primer
- Ensure your team is aligned with national frameworks if you are using AI in any current workflows

Artificial Inteligence will not save healthcare. Leaders will.

ETHICS + STRATEGY = RESILIENCE

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