The pulse of AI adoption in healthcare

Findings from the 2023 Becker's-Zoom leadership survey

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The presence of artificial intelligence in healthcare is growing. Between 2019 and 2022, investors poured $31.5 billion into healthcare AI, and most hospital and health system leaders believe this technology will significantly impact the industry in the next few years. However, deploying AI in the healthcare sector requires careful consideration, as this evolving technology comes with accuracy, reliability and privacy concerns — among others — and directly influences patients' experiences.

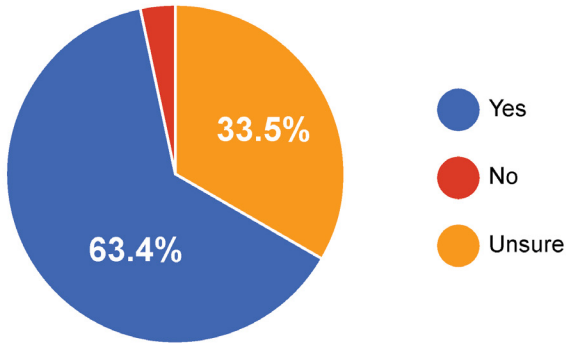
To take the pulse of AI adoption at hospitals and health systems, Zoom and Becker's Healthcare recently conducted a survey of clinical, administrative and IT leaders. More than 190 survey respondents participated, offering insights into the current AI landscape at their organizations, as well as what the future may hold.

AI is an important tool for achieving strategic healthcare objectives

Virtually all of the survey participants (96 percent) feel that AI has the potential to improve patient outcomes and experiences, and nearly two-thirds believe these technologies can reduce the overall cost of healthcare delivery. Confidence in AI's ability to improve these areas is reflected in hospital and health systems' investments this year — including AI-backed tools that help identify disease incidence and risk, personalize care interactions and relieve financial pressures via streamlined patient processes.

According to the survey, 68 percent of survey respondents already use AI tools in their work, with 19 percent currently using them on a daily basis. These numbers are expected to increase over time, as more than half (63 percent) of survey participants indicated their organizations intend to use AI to reach their future goals.

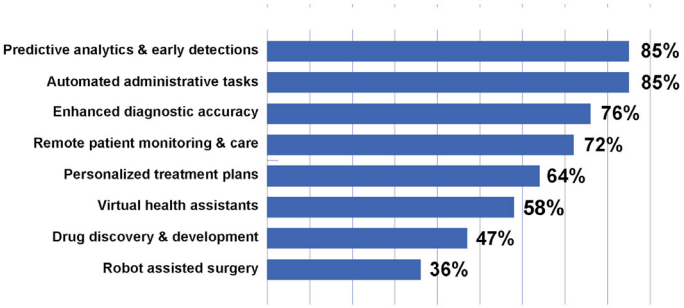
Does your organization intend on using AI to reach your future goals?



The anticipated benefits of integrating AI technologies into healthcare are diverse, ranging from better patient diagnosis and care to more streamlined tasks and faster pathways to new drugs. The vast majority (85 percent) of survey respondents indicated administrative tasks and early detection as areas that could see AI-driven improvements — aligning with key concerns and priorities in the healthcare C-suite right now, including innovation, addressing staff shortages and reducing employees' administrative tasks.

Further, healthcare leaders surveyed view AI-supported automation as a great complement to human-delivered medical care, rather than a replacement for it. These technology-based tools can help clinicians work at the top of their licenses by reducing the burden of documentation, automating routine tasks associated with digital imaging analysis, assisting clinical pharmacists with chart review and recommending the appropriate renal dosing or antibiotic selection.

In your opinion, what potential benefits do you see from the integration of AI technologies into healthcare?



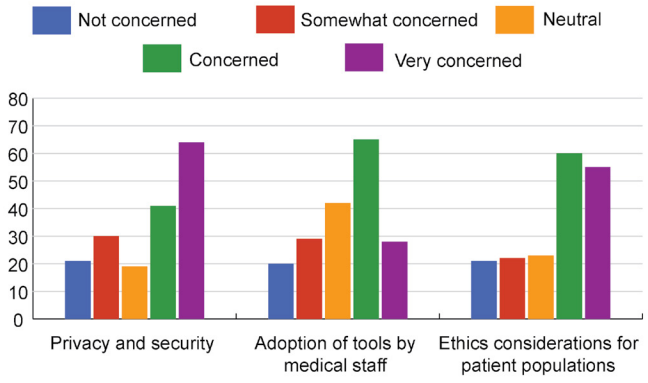
In addition to these benefits, some survey participants also noted AI could enhance reimbursement efficiency by connecting systems to payers for claim denial resolution — another issue that's top of mind for healthcare leaders, as the rate of denials has increased significantly in recent years, straining hospitals' and health systems' already shaky finances.

The combination of AI and collaboration technology has the potential to be particularly powerful in healthcare settings. Patient education is a major opportunity area, with AI chatbots providing basic, non-medical information to individuals. At organizations with contact centers, virtual agents such as chatbots can improve contact center efficiency while delivering higher levels of patient engagement.

Privacy, security & ethical concerns as AI adoption gains momentum

When it comes to the pace of implementing AI in healthcare settings, leaders have differing views. Among survey respondents, 41 percent feel the sector isn't moving fast enough in implementing AI; 32 percent feel the pace is just right; and 27 percent believe the shift is occurring too rapidly.

The greatest reservations survey respondents have about the application of AI in healthcare relate to privacy, security and ethics. Another area of concern is adoption of AI tools by medical staff. To support greater rates of adoption, integration with existing systems is essential. Providers and patients must trust AI-based interventions; however, many healthcare leaders are facing resistance in this realm, as staff are wary of technology replacing their jobs or their clinical expertise may be pitted against the technology.



There is great potential for AI to support healthcare in driving more efficient business and clinical operations, as well as improved patient care. Some survey participants feel that it could shift hospitals and health systems from the current paradigm of episodic and reactive care to continuous and proactive care.

As with any powerful technology tool, however, **AI must be deployed judiciously and responsibly**.