

# Patient Safety and Artificial Intelligence

## Considerations for Key Groups



## Patients and Patient Advocates

As generative artificial intelligence (genAI) is introduced into health care, patient safety and well-being must remain the top priority. The IHI Lucian Leape Institute offers the following recommendations for patients and patient advocates:

- **Demand transparency and trust:** Patients have the right to be informed when genAI is used in their care. While this may become less necessary over time as genAI tools become a more routine part of patient care, at this nascent stage health care organizations must establish minimum standards for disclosure and consent to ensure that patients are informed about the use of genAI in their care. Health systems must also provide patients with a choice to opt out of genAI and prepare alternatives should a patient refuse AI-based services.
- **Educate and support patients:** Patients need to be educated about how genAI will be used to assist clinicians in their care. Clinicians and AI technology (such as chatbots) must create safe spaces for patients to ask questions and share concerns, which includes prompting patients (e.g., “What questions are still on your mind?” or “What are your concerns or worries?”).
- **Enhance patient-centered care:** GenAI may relieve clinicians of time-consuming administrative tasks. While some of this time can be used to lower costs to patients and the health care system, a significant fraction of this time needs to be reallocated to improve the quality and patient-centeredness of care. Such efforts might include allocating more time to patient-clinician encounters, providing clinicians with additional time to review and edit documentation prior to and after an encounter, or providing clinicians with breaks to reduce their cognitive loads so they can more fully engage with patients.

### IHI Lucian Leape Institute Expert Panel Report on Patient Safety and AI

In January 2024, the IHI Lucian Leape Institute convened an expert panel to further explore the promise of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) and its potential risks for patient safety.

The panel reviewed the literature on AI and patient safety and engaged in a robust discussion that focused on three likely use cases for genAI in health care: documentation support, clinical decision support, and patient-facing chatbots.

The panel also reviewed considerations for key groups and provided specific recommendations and mitigation strategies for these audiences.

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- **Protect data privacy and security:** Health care systems and AI developers are responsible for ensuring that patient data is protected and used appropriately. Patients need to provide informed consent for their data to be used, including what data will be used, how it will be used, and how their data will be protected. Key groups also need to be proactive in identifying and addressing new data protection risks such as theft of audio recordings of patient-clinician conversations (e.g., through use of digital scribes).
- **Advocate for effective AI integration:** Patients and patient advocates can encourage the development of AI that enhances the patient-clinician relationship and support policies that maintain human connection and empathy in health care. While patients and advocates need to be included in genAI governance and advisory capacities, other key groups must remember that the responsibility and burden should not fall on patients and patient advocates to ensure that technology is safe for clinical use.