**What is in it for me: A Clinician’s Perspective of National Governance in AI**

**Introduction**

As artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly integrates into healthcare, it holds the potential to significantly enhance diagnostic accuracy, streamline workflows, and improve patient outcomes. For clinicians, however, the promise of AI comes with concerns. If not governed effectively, AI solutions could lead to unintended challenges, particularly in settings where resources are limited, and the demands on healthcare providers are high. Lessons from the integration of digital tools and data systems in healthcare indicate that technology, while beneficial, can sometimes hinder more than it helps or fails to provide the expected outcome without strong governance structures to ensure that it aligns with clinical needs and supports healthcare goals. (1)

In Mongolia, as with many low- and middle-income countries, AI could play a transformative role in overcoming barriers to Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Mongolia’s vast landscape and sparse population distribution make healthcare delivery challenging, particularly for rural populations. In this context, AI could support the nation’s goal of providing comprehensive and equitable healthcare. (2) However, the country’s journey toward digital transformation also highlights the need for careful governance to ensure that AI serves clinicians and patients effectively. (3) National policies that support clinicians in their roles, respect ethical standards, and protect patient privacy are critical to making AI a positive force in healthcare.

This paper explores the need for robust governance in AI while addressing the clinician's perspective. Drawing on Mongolia’s recent digital health initiatives, such as the Digital Health Landscape Assessment and the Ulaanbaatar Principles on AI Ethics in Medicine, this paper advocates for a governance model that balances innovation with ethical considerations to enhance the quality of healthcare.

**AI and Clinician Workload: Lessons from Digital Transformation Experiences**

The integration of digital tools in healthcare has often come with unintended consequences, as seen in several cases globally. For example, digital health tools such as electronic health records (EHRs) have brought valuable improvements in data availability but also created substantial documentation burdens. (4) Clinicians frequently express concerns about spending more time on documentation than patient interaction, a shift that affects both the patient experience and the clinician’s well-being. (4)

In Mongolia, where healthcare providers face considerable challenges due to limited resources and long patient travel distances, introducing new AI solutions without adequate governance could place additional burdens on clinicians. AI systems that flood clinicians with alerts or reminders may lead to “alert fatigue,” where clinicians become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of notifications, making it harder to prioritize patient care. Effective governance of AI in healthcare must prioritize reducing clinician workload by establishing standards for when and how AI systems should prompt alerts and ensuring that AI tools are intuitive, user-friendly, and supportive of the clinician’s workflow.

By actively involving clinicians in the design, testing, and evaluation of AI systems, Mongolia can help ensure these tools genuinely support end-users, minimizing administrative burden and supporting the goal of achieving UHC. This clinician-centered approach would enable AI to be a helpful ally in providing quality care, especially in remote and underserved regions.

**AI Perceived as Surveillance: Building Trust Through Transparent Governance**

For AI to support healthcare effectively, it must be deployed as an aid rather than as a tool for monitoring or surveillance. In settings where trust in digital systems is low, clinicians may perceive AI as a mechanism for oversight, leading to resistance against its adoption. This resistance is particularly evident when AI’s role and data-handling practices are not transparent.

National AI governance frameworks must, therefore, emphasize transparency in data usage and system intentions. Clinicians need assurance that AI systems are not designed to scrutinize their decisions but to complement their expertise and streamline their work. Transparent governance can foster trust by clearly outlining AI’s objectives, limitations, and intended outcomes. Furthermore, it is essential to communicate that AI is implemented to assist clinicians rather than replace or evaluate them.

This approach aligns with the Ulaanbaatar Principles on AI Ethics in Medicine, which prioritize human dignity, respect, and transparency. By adhering to these principles, Mongolia could develop a governance framework that can empower clinicians, support patient-centered care, and uphold ethical standards. Transparent governance will be crucial in ensuring that AI enhances Mongolia’s progress toward UHC by building trust and encouraging clinician engagement.

**Approval Mechanism for AI Solutions: Defining Standards and Regulatory Clarity**

One significant aspect of national governance in AI involves establishing a clear regulatory pathway for AI solutions, particularly in determining whether they should be classified as medical devices or clinical tools requiring formal approval. In some countries, AI in healthcare faces regulatory ambiguity. For instance, it may not be immediately clear whether AI applications used in diagnosis, risk prediction, or patient management require the same stringent approvals as other medical devices.

The approval mechanism for AI in healthcare should establish standards that ensure patient safety, efficacy, and ethical use before an AI tool is introduced into clinical practice. A well-defined approval process, similar to the certification processes for medical devices, is essential to assess AI applications rigorously. This involves evaluating the algorithms for accuracy, bias, data privacy protections, and adherence to clinical standards. Moreover, the mechanism should specify testing criteria, such as performance in real-world scenarios and continual assessment after deployment to monitor effectiveness and address potential risks.

In Mongolia, where digital health infrastructure is advancing, establishing a structured approval mechanism for AI is particularly relevant. This governance step would support Mongolia’s UHC goals by ensuring that AI solutions are both safe and beneficial for all patient groups. By mandating an approval pathway, Mongolia’s health system could set a high standard for AI solutions, fostering trust among clinicians and the public.

**Accountability and Liability in AI-Driven Decisions**

A critical component of national AI governance involves addressing accountability for decisions influenced by AI. In healthcare, AI recommendations may guide clinical decisions, but questions of liability arise if an AI system’s recommendations lead to errors or adverse outcomes. In such cases, it is essential to determine who is responsible: the clinician who followed the AI’s guidance, the nurse who implemented it, or the developers who created the AI system.

Clear guidelines on accountability will be especially important as Mongolia seeks to integrate AI into its healthcare system. For AI to support safe and effective healthcare, it must operate within a governance framework that addresses these issues head-on, defining liability boundaries for clinicians, nurses, and developers. Such a framework will not only protect clinicians but also encourage a culture of responsible AI use in healthcare.

Through regulatory policies that clarify liability and accountability, Mongolia can protect both clinicians and patients, creating a secure environment where AI is viewed as a valuable resource rather than a potential liability. Establishing these guidelines will be crucial to meeting UHC goals by ensuring AI enhances, rather than complicates, the healthcare system.

**AI Enhancing, Not Replacing, the Patient-Clinician Relationship**

AI holds tremendous promise for enhancing healthcare delivery, but its implementation must be balanced to protect the patient-clinician relationship. Clinicians need to be able to maintain meaningful interactions with patients, as these interactions are essential to quality care. A common concern associated with digital health tools is that they can shift clinicians’ focus from patients to screens, as seen in digital implementations where documentation and data entry consume a significant portion of clinicians’ time. (5)

To ensure that AI supports rather than detracts from patient care, Mongolia’s AI governance policies should mandate that AI solutions are designed to enhance rather than disrupt clinician workflows. For instance, AI-based documentation and decision-support tools could streamline data entry, enabling clinicians to spend more time with patients and contribute to better patient outcomes.

The Ulaanbaatar Principles echo this by emphasizing that AI should support the clinician’s role in delivering patient-centered care. Following these principles, Mongolia can build a healthcare environment where AI becomes a partner in care, helping clinicians focus on patients while contributing to UHC’s ultimate goal of equitable and accessible healthcare.

**Mongolia’s Digital Health Landscape and National Governance’s Role in AI**

Mongolia’s journey toward a digitally enabled healthcare system highlights its commitment to leveraging technology in support of UHC. With initiatives like the Digital Health Landscape Assessment and the Digital Health Convergence Workshop, Mongolia is actively working on the development of a framework for AI and digital health governance. These initiatives underscore the importance of a cohesive national digital health strategy that aligns with both international standards and Mongolia’s unique healthcare needs.

The collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Digital Development and Communications reflects the country’s dedication to creating an inclusive, transparent, and well-governed digital health ecosystem. By fostering a collaborative approach, Mongolia’s governance framework will be prepared to support the safe, ethical, and effective integration of AI in healthcare, guided by the Ulaanbaatar Principles on AI Ethics. This governance approach will not only support clinicians but also facilitate the broader goal of achieving UHC, ensuring that AI and digital health technologies are accessible, equitable, and beneficial to all populations.

**Recommendations for AI Governance in Healthcare**

To ensure that AI effectively supports clinicians and advances Mongolia’s UHC goals, the following recommendations for national AI governance in healthcare are proposed:

1. **Clinician Involvement in AI Development**: Engage clinicians in the design, testing, and evaluation stages of AI systems to ensure these tools align with clinical needs, reduce workloads, and support quality care.
2. **Transparent Data Governance**: Establish clear policies on data use, access, and privacy to help clinicians understand how AI data is managed and protected, consistent with the Ulaanbaatar Principles on transparency.
3. **Accountability and Liability Guidelines**: Develop clear policies on AI accountability, ensuring clinicians are not solely responsible for AI-related errors. This would help foster a culture of responsible AI use while safeguarding both clinicians and patients.
4. **Patient-Centered AI Solutions**: Prioritize AI solutions that enhance the patient-clinician relationship and reduce administrative burdens, enabling clinicians to focus more on patient care.
5. **Continuous Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms**: Implement regular evaluations of AI tools to monitor their impact on clinical workflows, clinician satisfaction, and patient outcomes. These feedback mechanisms will ensure AI systems are adapted to evolving healthcare needs.

Through these recommendations, Mongolia can establish a governance framework that empowers clinicians, safeguards patients, and upholds ethical standards in AI deployment. By supporting transparency, accountability, and clinician engagement, Mongolia can foster a healthcare environment where AI contributes meaningfully to UHC and enhances both the efficiency and quality of healthcare.

**Conclusion**

For clinicians, AI in healthcare is most beneficial when it supports, rather than complicates, the care delivery process. As Mongolia advances its digital health transformation, the establishment of clinician-centered governance frameworks will be key to avoiding challenges that have been observed in digital health implementations elsewhere. Effective governance will enable AI to empower clinicians, reduce administrative burdens, and enhance patient-centered care.

By embedding transparency, accountability, and ethics into its AI policies, Mongolia can make meaningful progress toward UHC, demonstrating how technology can serve as a valuable ally in achieving equitable and accessible healthcare for all. National AI governance that prioritizes clinicians' perspectives will ensure that AI serves as a tool for progress, benefiting both healthcare providers and patients. In doing so, Mongolia can set an example in building a healthcare system that leverages AI responsibly and compassionately for the greater good.

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