

Think of AI as a Tool, NOT Your Replacement

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in hospital pharmacies is growing...to try to improve patient care, efficiency, safety, etc.

Some are worried that it'll replace jobs.

But think of AI as a tool to enhance the work you do...NOT as a substitute for your knowledge, skills, or experience.

For example, expect to see AI features in your EHR to help identify potential med errors...assist with taking and documenting med histories...or optimize workflow, such as by triaging orders, calls, or tasks.

But your role will be essential in reviewing AI suggestions for appropriateness...making decisions based on knowledge and expertise...and effectively communicating and collaborating with patients and care teams.

AI can also help manage automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs)...detect diversion based on ADC and EHR data...and forecast inventory needs based on use patterns, real-time census data, and outbreak alerts.

Some hospitals are also piloting AI-powered systems that verify drugs and doses when prepping IVs.

But your oversight is still needed to limit errors and avoid waste.

Be open, patient, and curious as technology and your practice evolve...and consider these tips to leverage AI safely and responsibly.

Start small...such as by identifying potential areas to lean on AI.

For instance, you or your colleagues may be able to use AI to streamline administrative tasks, such as drafting emails...optimizing staffing or training schedules...or polishing performance evals.

But keep in mind, AI can "hallucinate," make errors, misinterpret data, or provide incomplete or biased info. Always verify accuracy.

Establish and follow guardrails. Never input identifying patient info or sensitive hospital data or financials into AI tools. And only use tools vetted and approved by your workplace...for privacy, security, etc.

For example, some AI applications can transcribe conversations such as with nurses into detailed notes...but explicit consent is needed.

Stay alert for colleagues, relatives, or friends using AI for medical or drug info...and point out benefits and limitations.

For instance, AI may provide quick answers to general questions. But it can struggle with nuanced clinical info...or reference old or irrelevant data that don't align with current practice or guidelines.

There's also a rise in "deepfake doctors"...or AI-generated videos impersonating physicians to spread misinformation. Encourage verifying online medical and drug info with a trusted human healthcare professional.

Explore our new resource, *Artificial Intelligence in Pharmacy Practice*, for more potential uses plus other considerations.

Key References:

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