

Artificial Intelligence in healthcare: What is going on, ethically?

Artificial intelligence poses unique benefits to the healthcare profession in terms of effectively diagnosing and treating illness. But no matter how effective this new technology promises to be, careful ethical reflection is needed to ensure that the human-centred dimension of healthcare is not lost.

On 12 August, Australian Catholic University's Plunkett Centre for Ethics will host a webinar to introduce healthcare professionals, ethicists and the public to bioethical issues in artificial intelligence.

Plunkett Centre researchers Dr Steve Matthews, Dr Marija Kirjanenko and Adam Wesselinoff will examine how large language models (LLMs) work, how they promise to improve healthcare, and what the research says about diagnostic accuracy, risk and the limitations of the technology.

Beyond the important but well-known risks of bias and privacy breaches, the Plunkett Centre's researchers will explore more fundamental ethical issues of responsibility, agency, knowledge and trust. The webinar will be a valuable introduction for anyone beginning to grapple with this new technology. Professionals already experienced with AI will benefit from a deeper ethical framework and a taste of the latest research.

Plunkett Centre Director Dr Xavier Symons said that despite the claims that AI would transform everything, robust and time-tested ethical frameworks remain our best means of putting the technology to good use.

"The ultimate test for the adoption of new technologies is whether they promote human flourishing. In healthcare, this means promoting and upholding the good of both the patient and the clinician as we consider the purported benefits of AI," Dr Symons said.

"After all, a person comes to his or her doctor to be healed, and this act of healing takes place within an ethical encounter between persons—not between a person and a machine. Reasoned and compassionate ethical reflection should therefore be encouraged at every stage of the AI 'revolution'."

Free online event: AI in healthcare: What is going on, ethically?

When: Tue, 12 Aug, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm AEST

Speakers:

- **Dr Steve Matthews is the Plunkett Centre's senior research fellow.**
- **Dr Marija Kirjanenko is an emergency physician and lecturer in philosophical bioethics with the Plunkett Centre.**
- **Adam Wesselinoff is the Plunkett Centre's project officer.**

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Media Contact: Emilie Ng, 0475 963 606, emilie.ng@acu.edu.au