PARIO PARTNERS

Care Meets Code: Frontline Voices on HealthTech & AI Automation

The healthcare workforce is ready to talk about artificial intelligence

Executive Summary

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to move from concept to implementation across healthcare, much of the conversation remains centred on technological innovation and clinical potential. It is our view that incorporating the perspective of frontline healthcare professionals into the conversation represents a critical enabler, and one that can materially influence the success of AI in the health sector.

This study, based on a national survey of one hundred and eighty-nine healthcare professionals, examines how frontline staff perceive the integration of AI into patient care. The data points to a workforce open to AI's potential, while seeking clearer structures, stronger communication, and practical guidance. Many respondents recognise the potential of AI to improve care quality and reduce administrative burden. However, uncertainty remains around legal responsibility, patient safety, and whether AI tools are being introduced with adequate training and strategic alignment.

Crucially, the data reveals that confidence in AI cannot be assumed. Respondents called for stronger governance, clearer communication, and training.

This report advocates early workforce engagement, targeted training, strong leadership, and addressing workforce concerns on governance.

About this Report

AI is transforming healthcare. Innovations range from administrative automation systems, designed to increase efficiency, reduce workloads and alleviate burnout, to advanced diagnostic systems that promise faster, more accurate detection and improved patient outcomes. Looking ahead, AI holds the potential to revolutionise preventative care and deliver personalised treatments.

This study investigates how frontline healthcare workers perceive the growing presence of AI in their field. While much attention is given to technological potential and innovation, our research focuses on capturing the voices of those at the heart of healthcare delivery. By highlighting their views, concerns, and hopes, this study aims to be a catalyst for dialogue between healthcare professionals and the healthtech community.

Methodology

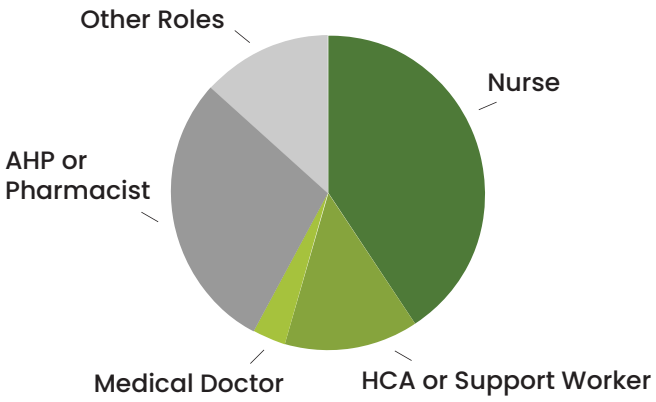
Pario Partners conducted an online survey in August 2025, gathering responses from one hundred and eighty-nine frontline healthcare workers.

Participants completed a structured online questionnaire combining rating scales, multiple-choice questions, and open-text responses. We used statistical analysis to identify key trends and thematic review to

to draw out the perspectives and experiences behind the data.

The respondent pool represented a diverse cross-section of the healthcare workforce. Seventy-two percent of participants identified as female, twenty-seven percent as male, and one percent as another gender. In terms of age distribution, the largest cohort fell within the forty to forty-nine age brackets, followed by those aged fifty to fifty-nine and sixty years or older. There was comparatively limited representation from individuals under the age of forty.

Participant Job Role



The Workforce Perspective

What follows is a focused analysis of the key themes emerging from our research, beginning with digital fluency and progressing through confidence and governance.

Pario Partners - Workforce advisory that goes beyond headcount, focusing on organisational culture, change readiness, and leadership alignment to create the conditions for innovation to succeed.

Digital Fluency

Over half of frontline staff say their employer has never engaged them in a conversation about AI.

The initial series of questions was designed to establish an understanding of healthcare professionals' current knowledge of artificial intelligence, as well as to assess the extent to which AI is a topic of active discussion within their professional environments.

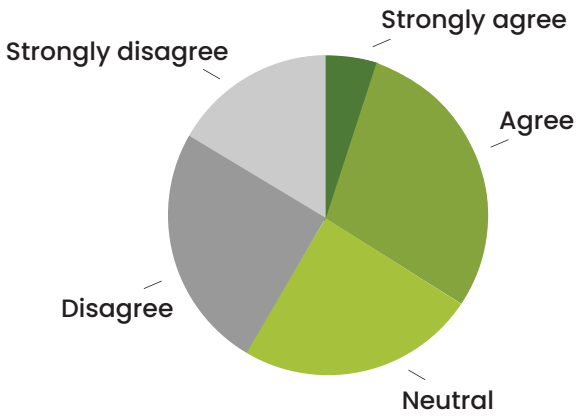
The findings from this survey present a broadly encouraging picture. Nearly half of respondents, forty-nine percent, reported that they understand the potential of artificial intelligence in healthcare. In contrast, only ten percent strongly disagreed with this statement.

Thirty-five percent of respondents indicated they regularly engage in discussions about AI with colleagues. This signals a degree of grassroots curiosity and self-led learning. However, a more notable finding is that fifty-one percent of respondents had not been engaged by their employer about emerging technologies.

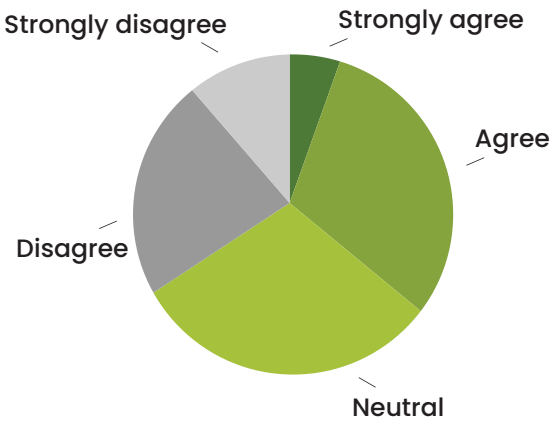
When analysed by role, the highest levels of agreement with the statement "I understand the potential of AI" came from healthcare assistants, at sixty-eight percent. This was unexpected. Based on the development of AI tools in domains such as diagnostics and pharmacy, we anticipated those in these professions to report greater understanding. This divergence suggests that engagement with AI is not strictly a function of exposure to advanced technologies or clinical specialisation.

This section of the survey closed with an open-ended question: **"What do you currently know about how AI is being used in healthcare, if anything?"** Responses revealed a wide spectrum of awareness regarding the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare. While many respondents were able to reference familiar applications, such as diagnostic imaging, medical note transcription, and robotic surgery, the majority did so with limited specificity. References to AI were often broad or conflated with general digital tools, such as scheduling systems or electronic health records. This suggests that while AI is increasingly recognised as part of the healthcare ecosystem, frontline professionals may lack a clear and consistent understanding of what it is, how it functions, and where it is meaningfully integrated into care delivery.

My workplace talks to staff about AI



I discuss AI with colleagues



The data points to a workforce that is open to innovation but underserved by current communication and training around AI. The gap between individual interest and organisational communication presents a strategic opportunity: the healthtech community, in collaboration with healthcare providers, can do more to engage frontline professionals in structured, meaningful dialogue about AI.

Pario Partners - Executive search and workforce advisory for the healthtech sector, helping organisations secure exceptional leaders and shape the strategies that make transformation work.

Frontline Confidence

AI confidence must be built, not assumed.

Participants were next asked whether they had encountered AI tools within their workplace settings, and to what extent they felt confident in the use and reliability of such technologies.

Responding to whether AI would fundamentally transform healthcare, only ten percent of respondents disagreed, an expected minority given the growing visibility of AI in the health service. More notable, however, was the thirty-six percent who responded neutrally, indicating a degree of hesitation or ambivalence within the workforce. This suggests that while belief in AI's potential is emerging, it is not yet universally understood.

A similar pattern emerged in relation to the future of clinical decision-making. While forty-one percent of respondents believe AI

will overtake human clinicians in this area within the next decade, twenty-seven percent expressed neutrality. This neutrality is telling; it reflects both the complexity of the issue and a cautious mindset among healthcare professionals. Together, these findings highlight a workforce that is neither resistant to AI nor fully convinced at this stage. Confidence should not be presumed, rather it is the imperative that leaders in both the healthtech and healthcare communities understand that confidence is earned.

We asked participants a single free-text question in this part of the survey: **"What's one experience (good or bad) you've had with technology in your role?"** The responses revealed a broad spectrum of experiences, with many highlighting both the potential and limitations of technology in frontline healthcare settings.

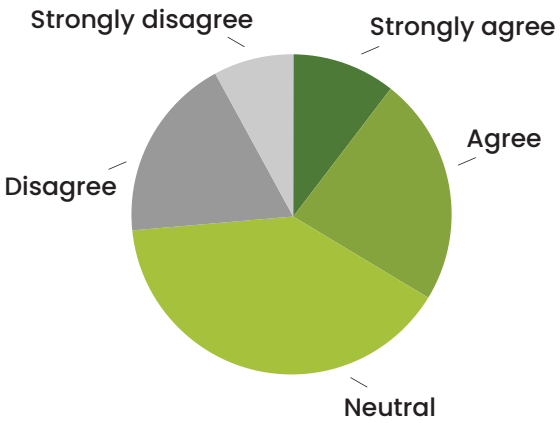
Positive accounts often focused on the efficiencies gained, particularly in documentation, communication, and diagnostics. Respondents noted improvements in speed, accuracy, and access to clinical information. Tools such as electronic prescribing systems, AI-assisted note generation, and robotic support in physical rehabilitation were mentioned as examples where technology tangibly enhanced clinical workflows or patient care.

However, many responses also reflected a deep frustration with the inconsistency and unreliability of digital infrastructure. System crashes, outdated platforms, internet outages, and inadequate training were frequently cited. Several participants described scenarios where technological failure directly impacted patient outcomes, delayed discharges, missed diagnoses, or administrative bottlenecks in overstretched services. There was also concern about the interoperability of systems, with incompatible platforms forcing staff to revert to paper-based processes, creating both duplication and inefficiency.

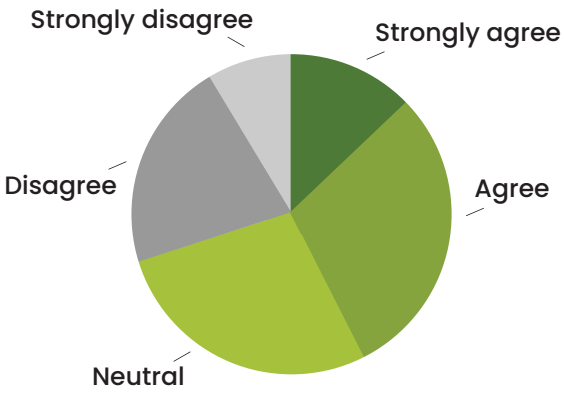
It is our view that ineffective implementation, coupled with limited leadership understanding of change management and workforce dynamics, poses a significant threat to staff confidence in the adoption of AI tools.

Our data reinforces the need for implementation strategies that are context-aware, and co-designed with frontline staff. This will create the conditions for technological innovation to enhance clinical practice while mitigating the challenges.

My confidence in AI is high



AI to guide clinical decisions in decade



Pario Partners - With access to thousands of healthcare and healthtech professionals, from frontline staff to senior leaders, we can deliver engagement programmes and surveys that provide real-world insight to guide product development and strategy.

Good Clinical Governance

Fifty-seven percent of health professionals are unclear on AI accountability.

In this section, we sought to understand how healthcare professionals perceive safety and clinical governance in relation to AI technologies.

The data shows that thirty-five percent of respondents were unsure where legal responsibility lies when AI is used in care delivery. Given the high importance of clinical decision-making and accountability, this level of uncertainty is concerning. While healthcare workers routinely complete mandatory training in areas such as Caldicott, RIDDOR, and information governance, there remains a notable gap when it comes to structured education around AI safety and legal frameworks.

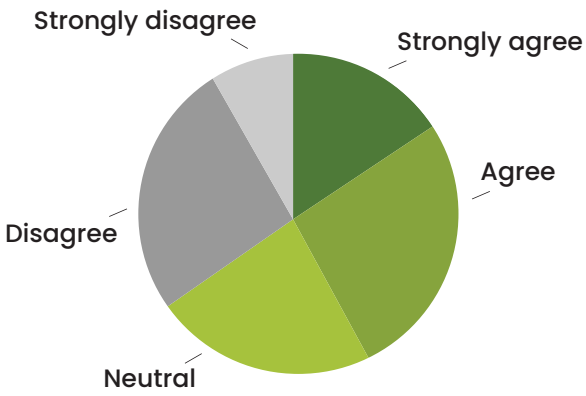
The *AI and Digital Healthcare Technologies Capability Framework*, published by Health Education England, is a welcome step forward. Further work is needed to embed this into mandatory training schemes. In our view, the current absence of formal requirements relating to AI governance within professional development frameworks presents a significant risk. As the use of AI becomes more embedded in frontline care, the workforce must be equipped not only to operate these tools safely, but to understand the legal, ethical, and organisational implications of their use.

Forty-one percent of respondents expressed confidence that patient safety is being appropriately addressed as new technologies are developed, nearly twice the proportion who disagreed. Yet the thirty-five percent who remained neutral is significant.

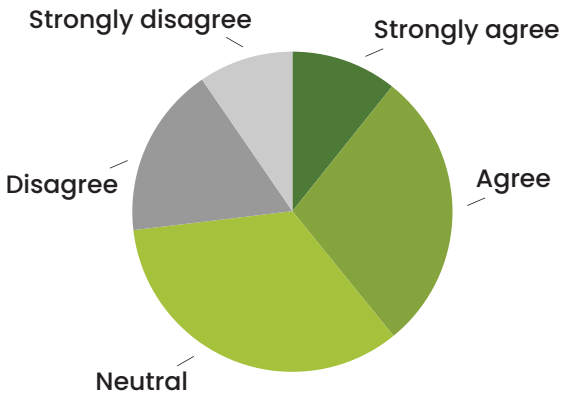
Past public health initiatives have demonstrated that even well-evidenced interventions can falter when frontline professionals are insufficiently engaged. As AI and other advanced technologies become embedded in care delivery, it is imperative that trust is cultivated through transparency, education, and co-development. Robust implementation must be matched by a deliberate strategy to build confidence among those delivering care.

When asked what would increase their confidence in the safety of AI, participants themselves called for clearer governance, accessible training, and assurance that human oversight would remain central. Many expressed uncertainties around accountability, ethical use, and the safeguarding of patient data. Others highlighted the absence of practical education, tested standards, and frontline involvement in AI development. These insights point to a clear imperative: confidence in AI cannot be assumed, it must be deliberately built through transparency, engagement, and investment in workforce capability.

I'm clear on legal responsibility with tech



Clinical governance is keeping up with new tech



Summary and Strategic Approach

Our research reveals a healthcare workforce open to AI's potential, yet constrained by gaps in training, governance clarity, and consistent leadership engagement. Grassroots curiosity is evident, with thirty-five percent of respondents actively discussing AI with peers, however, over half report they have not been engaged by their employer about emerging technologies. This disconnect is a strategic vulnerability, without deliberate engagement AI risks remaining a top-down initiative rather than becoming an embedded capability.

Confidence in AI adoption cannot be assumed. Without structured education, defined accountability, and credible governance, even the most sophisticated solutions risk under-delivery. Frontline staff want to know who is responsible, how patient safety will be safeguarded, and what governance frameworks will apply. History shows that poorly executed implementation, particularly in public sector digital programmes, can undo progress, erode trust, and attract damaging scrutiny.

The sector must now approach leadership with the same rigour it applies to technology. This means identifying professionals with the expertise to deliver large-scale transformation, leaders from established healthtech organisations with proven track records, and innovators from emerging ventures who can benefit from guidance in developing their vision into a sustainable, well-led business. AI adoption is not solely a technical challenge, it is a test of change leadership, cultural alignment, and operational discipline.

For both established organisations and new market entrants, success will come to those who invest early in leadership capability, actively involve the workforce in shaping adoption, and draw on specialist insight to connect strategy with execution. AI will not succeed in the health sector simply because it can, it will succeed because the right people, in the right roles, make it work.

Get in touch - If you are navigating AI adoption in healthtech and want to recruit staff and leaders, align your workforce, or capture real-world insight from healthcare professionals, we can help.

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Joseph has led the group for over twenty years and is an expert in strategy, process efficiency, and workforce research. He is a certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and studied Master's in Business Administration (MBA) at the University of York.

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