AI on Friday

What to Know, Why It Matters

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Pan American Health Organization
World Health Organization
Americas Region

Information Systems and Digital Health Unit
Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health

What Health Leaders Should Focus on Now

Evidence before scale • Oversight before autonomy

Validation before simulation • Trust by design

Evidence before scale

AI should expand only after evidence shows that it improves a meaningful clinical, public health or operational outcome. Leaders should look beyond technical accuracy and regulatory authorization to comparative outcomes, performance across population groups and results under local conditions.

Related reading: 1,357 AI medical devices cleared, 3 actually tested on patient outcomes, *PLOS Digital Health*, 2026.

Validation before simulation

Digital twins and synthetic simulations can help test scenarios without exposing patients to risk. Before simulated results guide real decisions, leaders should verify that the data, assumptions and models adequately represent the target population, health service and local conditions.

Related reading: Digital twins in healthcare: A systematic review of current applications, frameworks, and future directions, *Digital Health*, 2026.

Oversight before autonomy

The level of human oversight should reflect the system's capacity to act. Clearly define what AI may recommend, prepare or execute, who authorizes consequential actions, how activities are recorded and when the system must pause or escalate to a professional.

Related reading: Towards autonomous medical artificial intelligence agents, *Nature*, 2026. nature.com

Trust by design

Demonstrated reliability should be the basis of trust. Confidence, fluency and simulated empathy may create more trust than accuracy warrants. AI interfaces should communicate uncertainty, disclose limitations, support disagreement and make access to a qualified professional easy.

Related reading: Training language models to be warm can reduce accuracy and increase sycophancy, *Nature*, 2026.

Important reminder: AI-generated content may contain errors, outdated information or incorrect references. Always verify original sources, publication dates and links before using or sharing it, particularly for clinical, policy or technical decisions.

AI IN ACTION ACROSS THE AMERICAS

ANTICIPATE

AI-enhanced epidemic intelligence across 16 countries

In October 2026, 95 surveillance and public health professionals from 16 countries participated in **PAHO**-led activities using EIOS and new AI-based functionalities to improve the detection and management of signals from open sources. These capabilities complement traditional surveillance and support earlier verification and response.

System effect: More time to identify, assess and respond to emerging threats.

More: PAHO promotes the use of artificial intelligence and digital tools to strengthen epidemic intelligence in the Region

CONNECT

IS4H and PH4H FOR CONTINUITY OF CARE

AI depends on connected, interoperable and trusted data. Through the Information Systems for Health and the Pan-American Highway for Digital Health, **PAHO**, the **Inter-American Development Bank** and **Member States** are advancing the secure exchange of health data and information across services and borders. Current use cases include interoperable vaccination certificates, electronic prescriptions, clinical records and telehealth.

System effect: Essential health information can accompany people across services, levels of care and countries.

More: Countries of the Americas advance a health sector digital highway to connect care across borders - PAHO/WHO | Pan American Health Organization

EXTEND

AI-assisted tb screening reaches high-risk populations

AI-assisted digital radiography is helping bring tuberculosis screening closer to communities and vulnerable populations. **PAHO** reported that the implementation of this technology in Peruvian prisons led to a more than threefold increase in detection, demonstrating how AI can extend diagnostic capacity beyond conventional health facilities and reach populations facing major barriers to care.

System effect: Advanced diagnostic support reaches people and settings where specialized capacity is limited.

More: https://www.paho.org/en/news/24-3-2025-while-tb-cases-continue-rise-americas-new-innovations-promise-improvements-early

LEARN

A continuous learning pathway for the health workforce

PAHO's Digital Literacy Program brings together certifiable, self-paced courses, webinars, masterclasses, practical resources and the AI on Friday knowledge capsules. Its learning pathways help health professionals, managers, technical teams and decision-makers maintain current competencies in artificial intelligence and other rapidly evolving areas of digital health.
The certified AI courses include regional experiences, practical applications, responsible-use considerations and evidence-based approaches for health-system implementation.

System effect: Continuous and accessible learning helps the health workforce understand, assess and use AI responsibly.

- Explore Digital Literacy in AI for Health.
- Access the complete Digital Literacy Program.
- Learn about the certifiable Cycle II on Artificial Intelligence in Health.

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