



# AI and Nursing: Advancing Innovation, Equity, and Patient Care

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On my way to a workshop on Artificial Intelligence (AI), at my academic institution, someone stopped me by the elevator asking about my position as President of the Florida Nurses Association. The focus of the conversation was really about why I have an interest in AI and how it affects nursing practice. Everyone knows the best way to model leadership is to be open, flexible, and have the willingness to embrace new challenges, and learn how to cultivate innovative practices. The question here is what is the relevance and newness about AI in nursing practice?

## Leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Nurses not only navigate new systems, but have the courage to grow, learn, and innovate. As nurses, we must learn to face new and ongoing challenges in healthcare delivery and leverage the use of participatory technology integration to improve workflow, patient care, promote innovation, health equity and positive health outcomes. AI will not replace nursing, but enhance the workflow, practices, and policies. AI has the potential to improve efficiency and quality care in various healthcare settings. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health equity is defined as “the absence of unfair and avoidable or remediable differences in health among population groups defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically. Health equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential

for health and well-being” (WHO, 2024). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2024) defines health equity as the attainment of the highest level of health for all people, where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, preferred language, or other factors. As we continue to explore the importance and necessary use of AI and its influence in clinical decision-making in primary care, we need to assess its risks and threats to health equity among diverse populations to avoid unnecessary harm to unserved and underserved populations. Clark et al, posited that AI applications are likely to reflect human biases in ways that will widen inequities by race/ethnicity, gender identity, and other dimensions of social identity. Nurses need to understand the needs of diverse populations especially those who have been marginalized and faced discrimination, lack of access to care, and poor health outcomes.

Having the moral compass to participate in meaningful and intentional conversations and community engagement about AI implementation will be critical. To effectively use AI to improve clinical practice will require conscious and active participation of patients and community stakeholders from diverse backgrounds addressing social determinants of health, structural racism, ethical issues and potential biases that adversely impact health equity. Nurses have the opportunity to embrace AI to achieve health equity and be part of the solutions in driving change by utilizing innovative approaches to health care and reducing health care disparities among marginalized populations by forging and fostering interprofessional collaboration with Information technology (IT) users, physicians, and other primary care professionals to positively effect change in the use of technology in advancing and preserving health equity.

In conclusion, I encourage the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) and Ethics Special Interest Groups of the Florida Nurses Association to address and highlight the importance and ethical use of AI in nursing practice and use of DEI concepts, principles, and practices at improving health equity. As we begin this new year, let us reflect and appreciate what we have accomplished in the year 2024 and look forward to 2025 with new and innovative ways to advance nursing practice and promote a healthy Florida. ■

