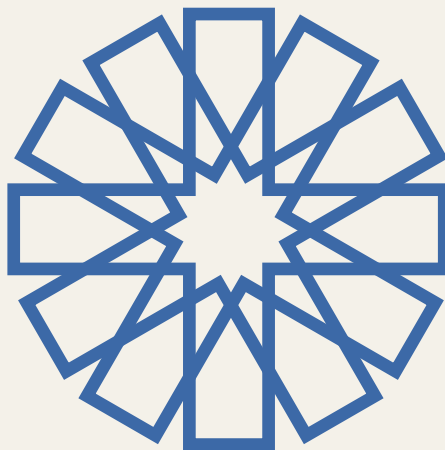# FOUNDATIONAL PUBLICATION

Issued by the Founding Council of the International Society of Medical AI (ISMAI)

Manifesto for Responsible AI in Healthcare

Safeguarding Human Dignity, Clinical Integrity, and Responsible Innovation

ISMAI

International Society
of Medical AI

Machinam Medicorum

Preamble

From the earliest pledges of the Hippocratic tradition to the modern affirmations of dignity and autonomy, medicine has been the guardian of humanity's most sacred trust. Now, on the threshold of a new epoch in which artificial intelligence promises vast possibilities, yet harbours profound perils, the clinician's moral calling stands in sharper relief than ever. We cannot merely adapt to these forces; we must guide them—lest the healing art be hollowed by unexamined technology. This moment is both dangerous and hopeful, one that demands not passivity but principled leadership from those sworn to *do no harm*. By uniting around our shared ethic of beneficence and justice, we can hold fast to our founding purpose: to ensure that every advance in AI remains anchored in the timeless covenant to serve and protect human life.

Declarations

We believe that every advance in artificial intelligence must be guided by the enduring mandate to "do no harm", preserving the moral covenant physicians have upheld since the days of Hippocrates.

We stand for the dignity of each patient, ensuring that no algorithm, however sophisticated, overrides the sanctity of individual autonomy, privacy, and consent.

We call for frameworks of collaboration in which clinicians, patients, developers, and policymakers share responsibility, embracing transparent and participatory governance of all medical AI solutions.

We uphold the bedrock principles of beneficence and justice, insisting that AI be used to reduce disparities in health, rather than to deepen them.

We believe that trust is essential in healing, and that every AI tool must therefore be open to examination, grounded in evidence, and readily explainable to those it serves.

We stand for the primacy of the patient-clinician relationship, defending human empathy as irreplaceable in a world of ever-accelerating technological change.

We call for robust accountability and enforcement mechanisms that hold every stakeholder answerable for AI's outcomes, maintaining our collective duty to protect life and promote well-being.

We uphold the enduring virtues of compassion, honesty, and prudence, pledging that AI's promise shall not dim the healer's call, but rather illuminate a more just and humane future for all.

Explanatory Prose

From the earliest call to "do no harm" enshrined in the Hippocratic Oath, medicine has stood on pillars of beneficence, non-maleficence, and respect for human dignity. As we welcome artificial intelligence into the healing arts, we affirm that no algorithm, no matter how innovative, may be permitted to supplant the moral covenant established between clinician and patient. When developers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals unite under the shared duty to protect autonomy, privacy, and consent, they uphold the ethos that animates all ethical codes—from the World Health Organization's insistence on human rights as the core of digital health, to UNESCO's declaration that transparency and inclusivity are indispensable in AI governance. These collaborative frameworks, grounded in justice and evidence-based practice, ensure that medical AI endeavours to improve health outcomes while safeguarding the sacred trust between patient and clinician that centuries of clinical practice have carefully nurtured.

At the heart of this vision stands a resolute commitment to preserving the patient-clinician relationship. We reject the notion that clinical authority can be outsourced to non-human systems: the art of healing transcends data inputs and outputs. The guiding virtues of compassion and honesty demand that every decision, no matter how technologically advanced, be anchored in the unique story of the individual who seeks our care. By embracing accountability and explainability as core design principles, we guarantee that the promise of AI does not overshadow the enduring call to serve human well-being. In so doing, we reject playing a purely reactive role, one in which clinicians guard against dehumanising effects, and promote a proactive model in which physicians, nurses, engineers, and patients cooperate in the development of tools that promote equity, reliability, and fairness in every clinical context.

This manifesto thus stands as an invitation, rather than an admonition. By calling all stakeholders to adopt a rigorous, yet humane, approach, we celebrate the possibility that AI can illuminate a more just future without diminishing the vital bond at the heart of medicine. We envision a world in which responsible innovation amplifies empathy and fosters collaboration across disciplines. Guided by the timeless virtues of prudence and moral courage, the International Society of Medical AI extends its hand to each hospital, clinic, and laboratory, welcoming them into a fellowship that holds progress accountable to conscience, and in which technology is always, and only, in service of life's dignity and promise.

A Call to Action

We invite physicians, nurses, hospital leaders, and all who hold patients' welfare in trust to join with ISMAI as partners in forging a more humane future for medical technology. In an age shaped by rapid innovation, the power of collective resolve is pivotal; each new voice can help transform these ideals into binding principles that guide policy and practice around the globe. Together, we can ensure that AI remains a faithful instrument of human compassion and equity rather than a force that undermines the human judgments that comprise compassionate and ethical healthcare. The time has come for every healthcare institution to join this effort, to unite in upholding the highest ethical standards, and to unite to safeguard the age-old pledge to "do no harm". Let us rise as one to honour medicine's sacred covenant and shape the future of healing for generations to come.