NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

AI and the technology enabled healthcare worker

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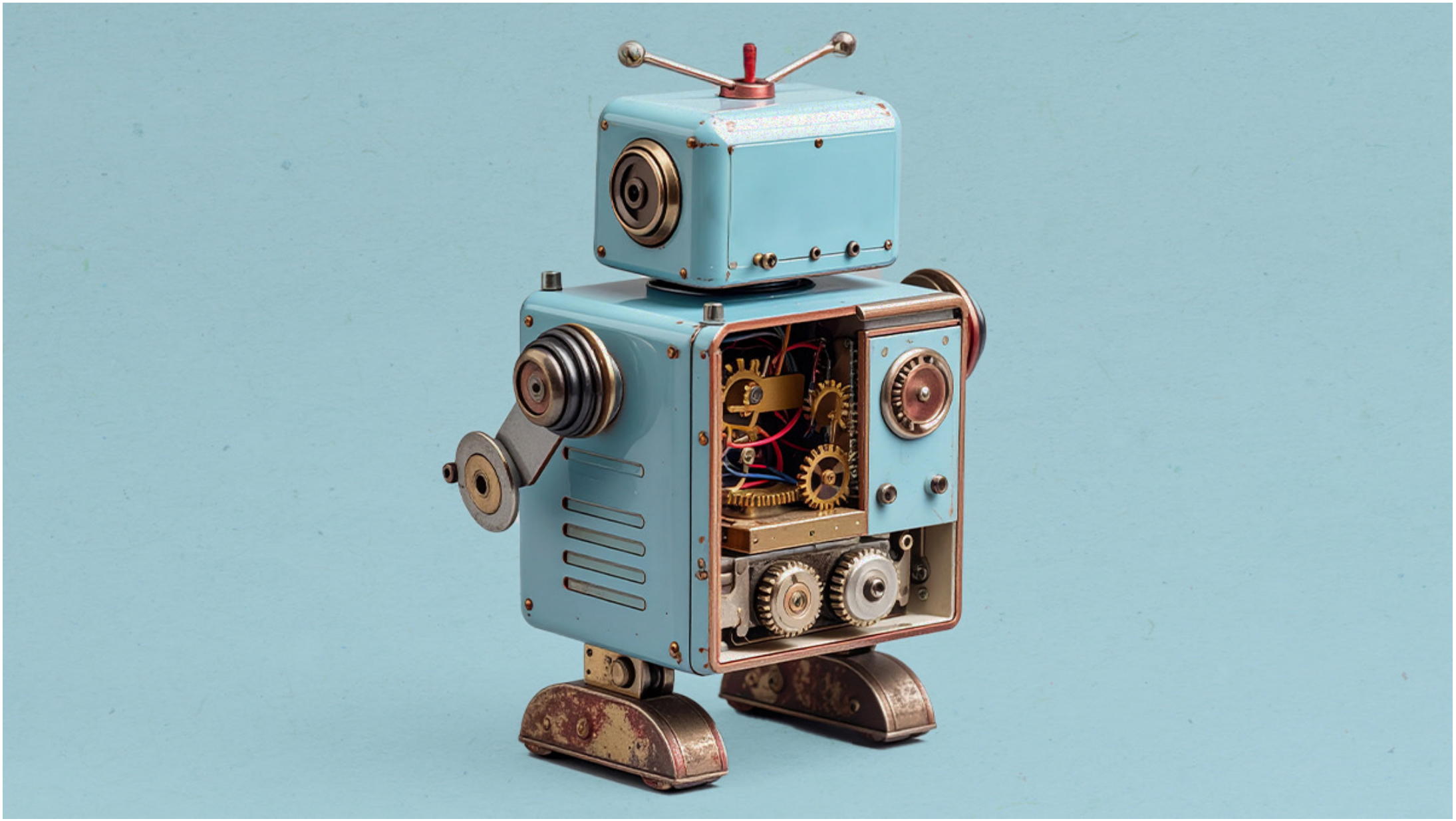
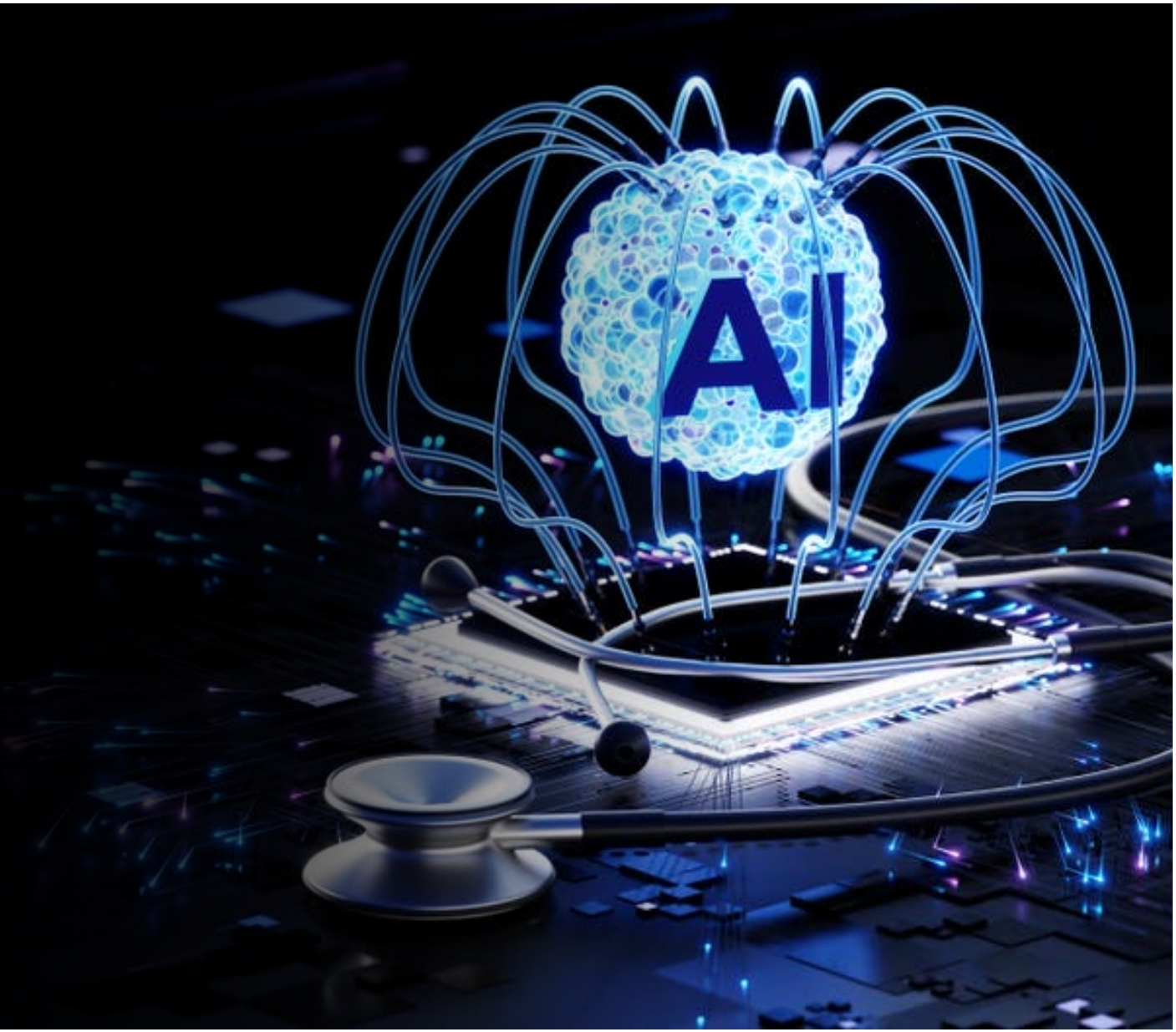
SAACHS
South African Association of Campus Health Services



What Every Healthcare Worker Should Know About AI



AI Isn’t Coming — It’s Already Here

AI is in your EHR system, flagging unusual patterns in patient data.
It’s in your email inbox, suggesting replies.
It’s even behind hospital scheduling systems, predicting staff shortages before they happen.

So if you still think AI is a future problem, you’re already behind. The professionals who win in this new world are the ones who learn how to make AI their co-pilot — not their competition

AI’s Real Power Is in Time, Not Technology

AI’s biggest gift isn’t smarter machines. It’s more **time** for humans.

Imagine this:

- Charting reduced by 40% because AI drafts your summaries.
- Administrative reports that once took days — done in minutes.
- Automated patient follow-ups that free you to actually rest.

That’s what happens when AI is used ***right*** in healthcare.

It’s not about replacing expertise — it’s about letting doctors, nurses, and leaders focus on what only humans can do: **care**.

You Don’t Need to Code — You Need to Communicate

You don’t have to be a “tech person” to understand AI.
But you do have to learn how to talk to it.

Prompting, or giving AI the right instructions, is quickly becoming the new literacy.
If you can write a good question, you can use AI.

Examples:
“Summarize this patient’s notes into a discharge summary.”
“Create a daily medication reminder email for diabetic patients.”
“Draft a presentation on burnout reduction strategies for nurses.”

This isn’t about coding.
It’s about thinking clearly and communicating effectively.

AI Won’t Save You from Bad Systems

AI can’t fix what’s broken at the core.

If your facility is drowning in bureaucracy, poor leadership, or bad data — AI will only make those problems faster and louder.

AI is only as good as the humans managing it and the data feeding it. Garbage in, garbage out.

That’s why healthcare leaders must treat AI adoption as a cultural transformation, not a tech upgrade.

Ethics and Privacy Aren’t Optional

You can’t talk about AI in healthcare without talking about trust.
Patient data is sacred. Every tool you use must protect it — not exploit it.

Before adopting any AI solution, ask:

- How is this data being stored and used?
- Who has access to it?
- What happens if the system makes a wrong decision?

The goal isn’t to be first to use AI.
It’s to be the most responsible with it.

AI Will Create New Healthcare Leaders

- The next generation of healthcare leaders won't be defined by degrees or job titles. They'll be the ones who know how to use AI to:
  - Save time
  - Cut costs
  - Improve outcomes
  - Empower their teams
- They'll be the ones who blend compassion with automation — who understand that tech should serve humanity, not replace it.
- If you want to stand out in healthcare over the next 5 years, start learning AI now.
- Not just what it does — but how to apply it strategically.

Where to Begin

If you’re new to AI, start simple:

Use ChatGPT or Claude to summarize medical articles or draft reports.

Learn one new AI tool per month — voice dictation, data analysis, or presentation design.

Take a short course on AI for Healthcare to understand where the industry is going.

Join a community that discusses real-world AI use cases — not just tech theory.

You don’t need to do it all.
You just need to start.

Pain Points in HE Sector Healthcare

The main pain points in student healthcare in South Africa include significant **access barriers**, **mental health challenges**, and systemic issues within the broader public health system like **resource shortages** and **poor infrastructure**.

AI as the Invisible Assistant

AI can address significant pain points in South African university student healthcare, primarily by increasing

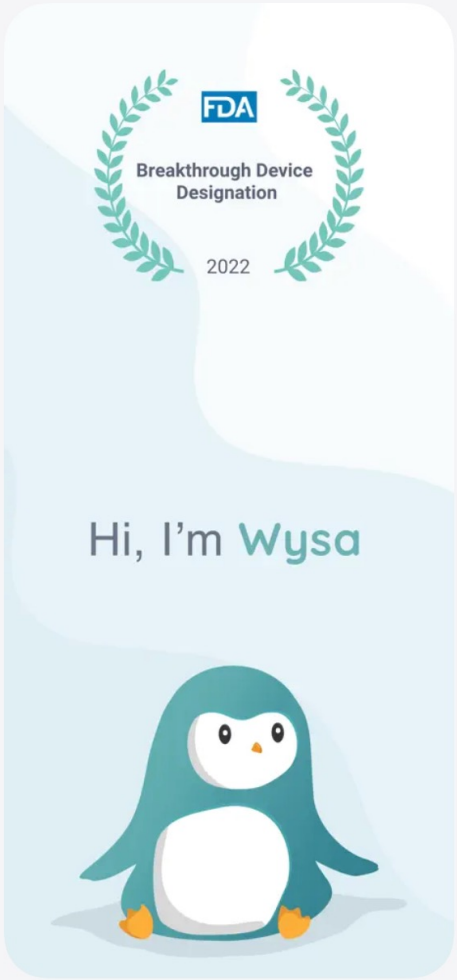
accessibility, affordability, and efficiency of services,

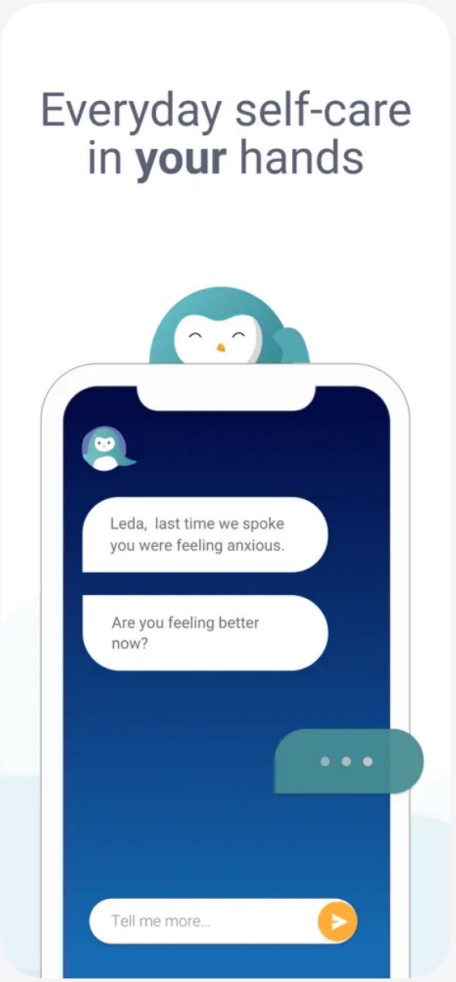
especially in mental health support.

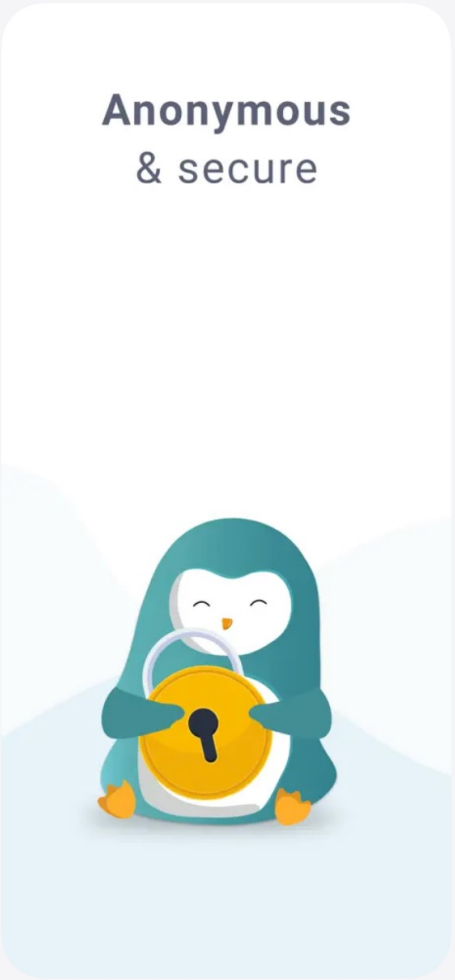
24/7, Stigma-Free Mental Health Support

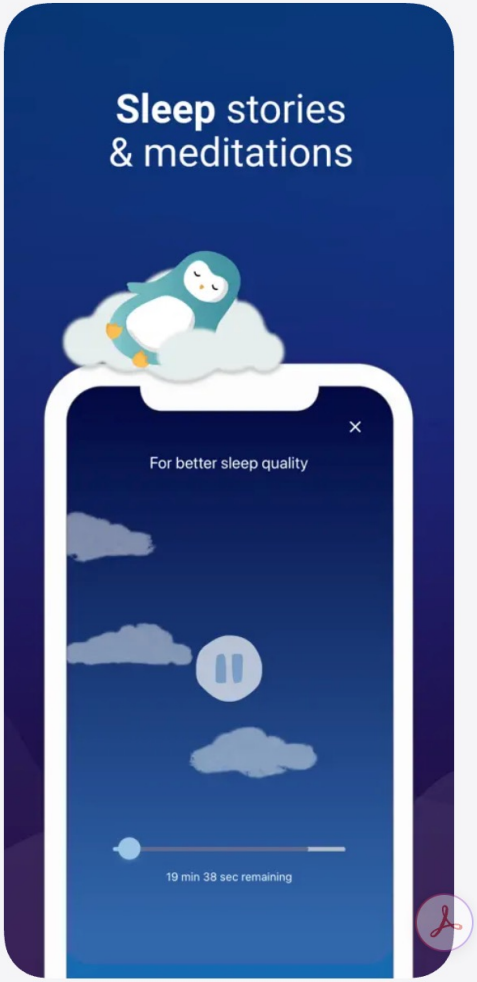
AI-powered chatbots (like UWC's "Wysa") provide immediate, non-judgmental, and confidential support at any time of the day or night.

This helps overcome the social stigma associated with seeking human counselling and ensures support is available during periods of high stress, such as exams.


FDA
Breakthrough Device Designation
2022
Hi, I'm Wysa


Everyday self-care in your hands
Leda, last time we spoke you were feeling anxious.
Are you feeling better now?
Tell me more...


Anonymous & secure


Sleep stories & meditations
For better sleep quality
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Early Detection and Intervention

By analyzing user interactions and other data points (like academic performance and engagement levels), AI algorithms can act as early warning systems, identifying students at risk of mental health issues or academic struggles before they escalate. This allows for proactive intervention and targeted support, improving retention and well-being.

Addressing Resource Shortages

South Africa faces a shortage of mental health professionals and limited public healthcare capacity, leading to long waiting lists. AI chatbots offer a cost-effective and scalable solution, augmenting existing human counselling services and extending support to a wider audience without needing a proportional increase in human staff.

Personalized Guidance and Triage

AI can offer tailored self-help strategies, coping mechanisms, and general health advice based on a student's specific needs. AI-driven triage systems can also guide students to the most appropriate level of care, whether it's self-help resources, a university helpline, or a real-time counselling service, streamlining patient management.

Accessibility for Rural Students

AI-powered telemedicine and mobile health apps can bridge geographical gaps, providing services to students in remote areas who may not have easy access to campus or local clinics.

Administrative Efficiency

AI can automate routine administrative tasks such as appointment scheduling, record-keeping, and resource allocation, freeing up healthcare practitioners' time to focus on direct patient care.

End goal?

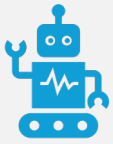
While AI offers immense potential, successful implementation requires addressing challenges such as ensuring data privacy and security (adhering to regulations like the POPIA), managing the digital divide (connectivity and hardware issues), and integrating AI tools within a comprehensive, human-centric support framework.

The goal is a blended care model that leverages the strengths of both technology and human expertise.

Final Thoughts

Healthcare has always been about adaptation.
From paper charts to digital records, from stethoscopes to smart sensors — we've always evolved.

AI is just the next step.
The question isn't *if* it will change healthcare.
It's *how prepared you'll be when it does*.



So start today.
Learn the basics.
Experiment.
And remember — AI doesn't replace expertise. It amplifies it.

Thank You