Executive summary

The global healthcare landscape is defined by a series of related challenges. Rising costs lead to funding pressures and inequities in healthcare provision, while patient demand for more personalized care for their complex needs puts further stress on health systems. Two years after the global pandemic, clinicians continue to be under pressure and are being asked to do more with increasingly stretched resources.

Against this backdrop, the emergence of AI in healthcare has the potential to respond to many of these challenges.

As AI usage rises, it's vital that we understand clinicians' views and needs. Elsevier developed the *Clinician of the Future* series in 2022 to explore trends and changes that will impact the future of healthcare – and therefore shape the clinician of the future. AI has emerged as a key topic in our annual reports, and we dive deeper into the potential of AI in this 2025 edition along with other priority focus areas for clinicians: misinformation, the technology readiness gap, healthcare systems in crisis and more.

Technology has the potential to address some of the biggest challenges clinicians face today, from burnout to increasing patient demand, and will have a major impact on our clinicians of the future.

In this report, we share the views of clinicians around the world gathered through an extensive global survey on the state of healthcare today, the role of AI in transforming the industry and the future of healthcare.

Online survey
March to April 2025

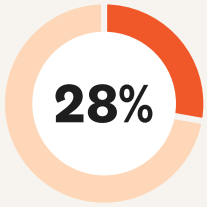
n = 2,206 clinicians
(1,781 doctors and 425 nurses)
from **109 countries**

To improve representativeness, we weighted responses geographically and to equally represent doctors and nurses in the clinician totals. See appendices for more detail.

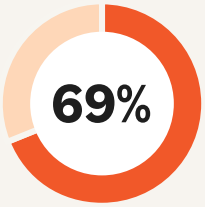
The current state of healthcare

Chapter 1:

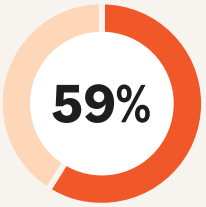
Clinicians today are busier than ever, and it's impacting the quality of care they can provide. Clinicians believe AI could contribute positively to solving their problems, but relatively few think their institutions are performing well in this area.



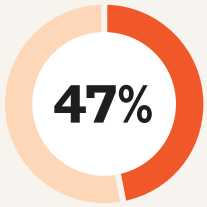
Over a quarter of clinicians think they don't have enough time to deliver quality care, with high patient volume as the most cited cause (by 74% of this group).



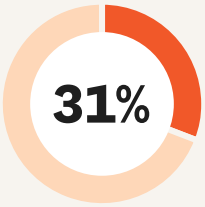
Over two-thirds of clinicians are seeing more patients now than two years ago.



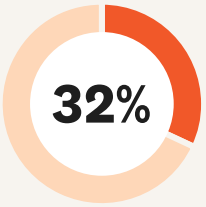
Six in ten clinicians say medical misinformation is hindering patient compliance with recommended treatments.



Almost half of clinicians say tiredness has impaired their ability to treat patients effectively.



Nearly a third of clinicians are considering leaving their role in the next couple of years despite notable clinician shortages globally, an improvement since 2023 (37%).



Only around a third of clinicians think their institutions perform well in providing digital tools, including AI. They also consider institutional performance lower for AI training (30%) and AI governance (29%). Meanwhile, 57% say guidance on how to use AI would increase their trust in it.

How AI is transforming healthcare

Chapter 2:

Usage of AI tools is increasing dramatically among clinicians, with 76% having used an AI tool, and nearly half for work purposes. They recognize many benefits that improve their own work and patient experiences, though AI use for any specific clinical activity remains relatively low. In some regions, particularly North America and Europe, there remains some hesitation around certain applications of AI. Clinicians want transparency, security and assurances on the quality of content in AI tools they can trust.

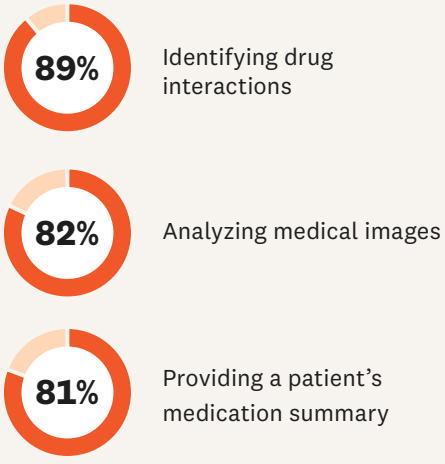
48% of clinicians have used an AI tool for work purposes – nearly double the 26% reported in 2024.

57% of clinicians currently perceive clinical AI tools as saving them time, empowering them (53%) and giving them more choice in how they care for patients (53%).

30% of clinicians are already using AI tools to identify drug interactions and 21% to analyze medical images. However, today only 16% are using AI tools to help make clinical decisions. This is despite an additional 48% of clinicians expressing a desire to use AI to help with clinical determinations.

There is a usage gap when it comes to the type of AI tool clinicians are using. Of those that use AI tools for work, 97% have used a generalist tool such as ChatGPT for work purposes. In comparison, 76% have used a clinical-specific AI tool.

Top ways clinicians use (or would like to use) AI tools in clinical practice include:



The future of healthcare

Chapter 3:

Clinicians are optimistic about the benefits AI will bring in the next two to three years. Building on the developments we have already seen in areas like medical imaging, clinicians see potential for AI to save them time, improve the diagnosis process and ultimately improve patient outcomes. Nearly two-fifths believe AI will lead to more patients self-diagnosing.

70% of clinicians predict in the next two to three years AI will save them time. They believe AI will have a positive impact in other areas, including enabling faster (58%) and more accurate (54%) diagnoses, and helping improve patient outcomes (55%).

41%
of clinicians think in the next two to three years, those who use AI will deliver a higher quality of care than those who don't.

56%
of clinicians think that AI will analyze all medical images to identify abnormalities in the next two to three years.

38%
think that most patients will self-diagnose with AI tools available online rather than see a clinician in the next two to three years.

Regional differences

In this global report, there are geographical differences in how clinicians perceive AI in healthcare and how they think it can be used in the future. We look at differences by broad regions, North America, South America, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East and Africa. We identify some notable differences by country below.

USA

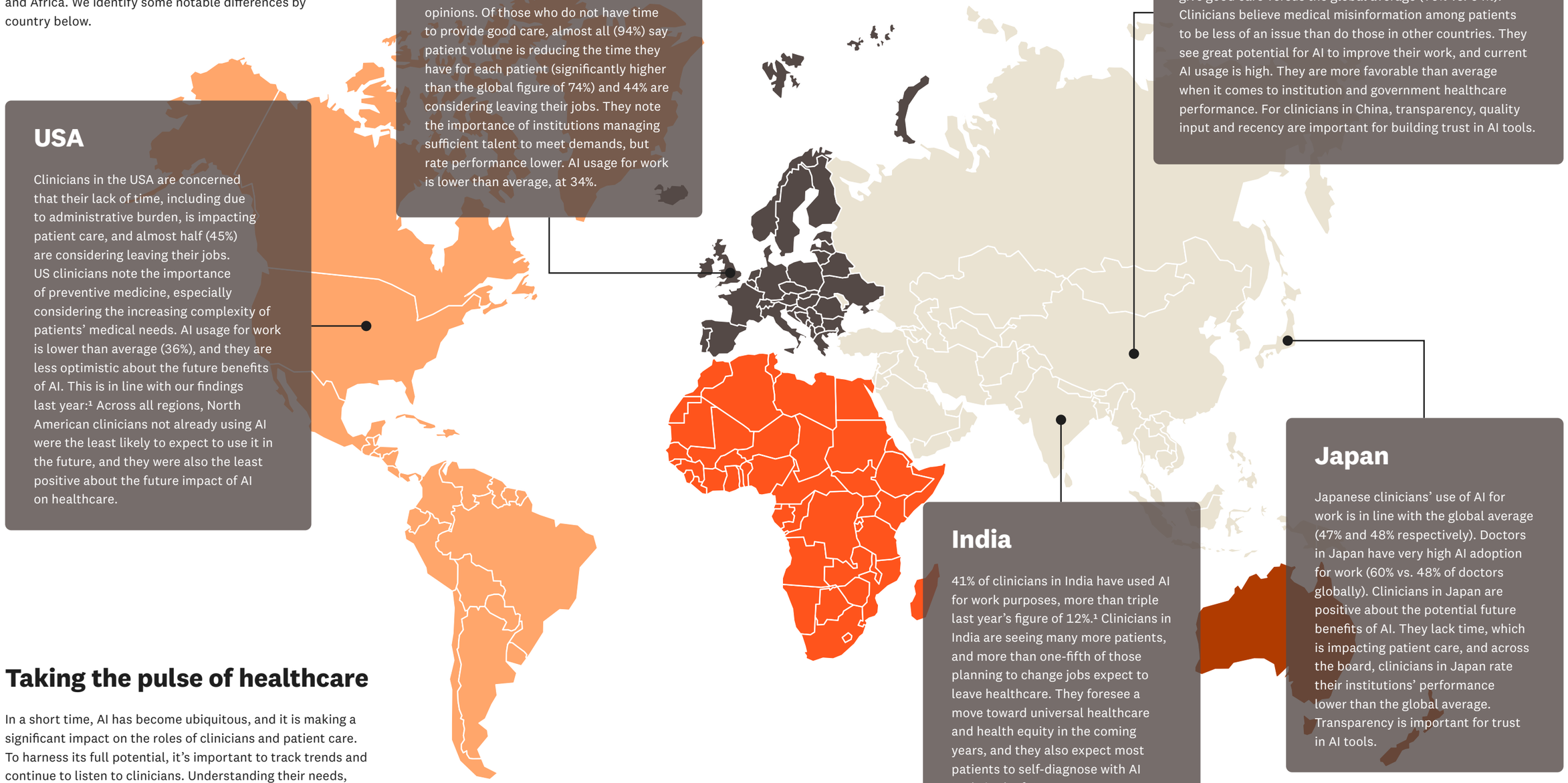
Clinicians in the USA are concerned that their lack of time, including due to administrative burden, is impacting patient care, and almost half (45%) are considering leaving their jobs. US clinicians note the importance of preventive medicine, especially considering the increasing complexity of patients' medical needs. AI usage for work is lower than average (36%), and they are less optimistic about the future benefits of AI. This is in line with our findings last year:[1] Across all regions, North American clinicians not already using AI were the least likely to expect to use it in the future, and they were also the least positive about the future impact of AI on healthcare.

UK

Clinicians in the UK are more skeptical than average about the potential benefits of AI, and they are less likely to use it to make clinical decisions and for second opinions. Of those who do not have time to provide good care, almost all (94%) say patient volume is reducing the time they have for each patient (significantly higher than the global figure of 74%) and 44% are considering leaving their jobs. They note the importance of institutions managing sufficient talent to meet demands, but rate performance lower. AI usage for work is lower than average, at 34%.

China

Compared to the global average, a greater proportion of clinicians in China are seeing more patients than two years ago (75% vs. 69%) and believe they have sufficient time to give good care versus the global average (79% vs. 64%). Clinicians believe medical misinformation among patients to be less of an issue than do those in other countries. They see great potential for AI to improve their work, and current AI usage is high. They are more favorable than average when it comes to institution and government healthcare performance. For clinicians in China, transparency, quality input and recency are important for building trust in AI tools.



India

41% of clinicians in India have used AI for work purposes, more than triple last year's figure of 12%.[1] Clinicians in India are seeing many more patients, and more than one-fifth of those planning to change jobs expect to leave healthcare. They foresee a move toward universal healthcare and health equity in the coming years, and they also expect most patients to self-diagnose with AI tools in the future.

Japan

Japanese clinicians' use of AI for work is in line with the global average (47% and 48% respectively). Doctors in Japan have very high AI adoption for work (60% vs. 48% of doctors globally). Clinicians in Japan are positive about the potential future benefits of AI. They lack time, which is impacting patient care, and across the board, clinicians in Japan rate their institutions' performance lower than the global average. Transparency is important for trust in AI tools.

Taking the pulse of healthcare

In a short time, AI has become ubiquitous, and it is making a significant impact on the roles of clinicians and patient care. To harness its full potential, it's important to track trends and continue to listen to clinicians. Understanding their needs, experiences, challenges, predictions and concerns can ensure that tomorrow's support systems, including AI tools, are shaped for clinicians' benefit.

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