

Building a Scalable, Sustainable Strategy for AI and Innovation

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42nd Annual Oregon
Rural Health Conference

October 1 - 3, 2025
Riverhouse Lodge | Bend, OR



Hello!

RURAL HEALTH RESILIENCY



Cybersecurity



- Free cybersecurity assessments to evaluate security risks and identify an action plan
- Free cybersecurity awareness training resources for all staff
- Foundational cyber certification for IT staff to expand skills

AI & Innovation



- Free Cloud Capability Assessments★
- Free/low-cost AI Tools
 - Claims Denial Navigator★
- AI Skilling Resources★
- Free AI & Cyber Webinar Series

Affordability



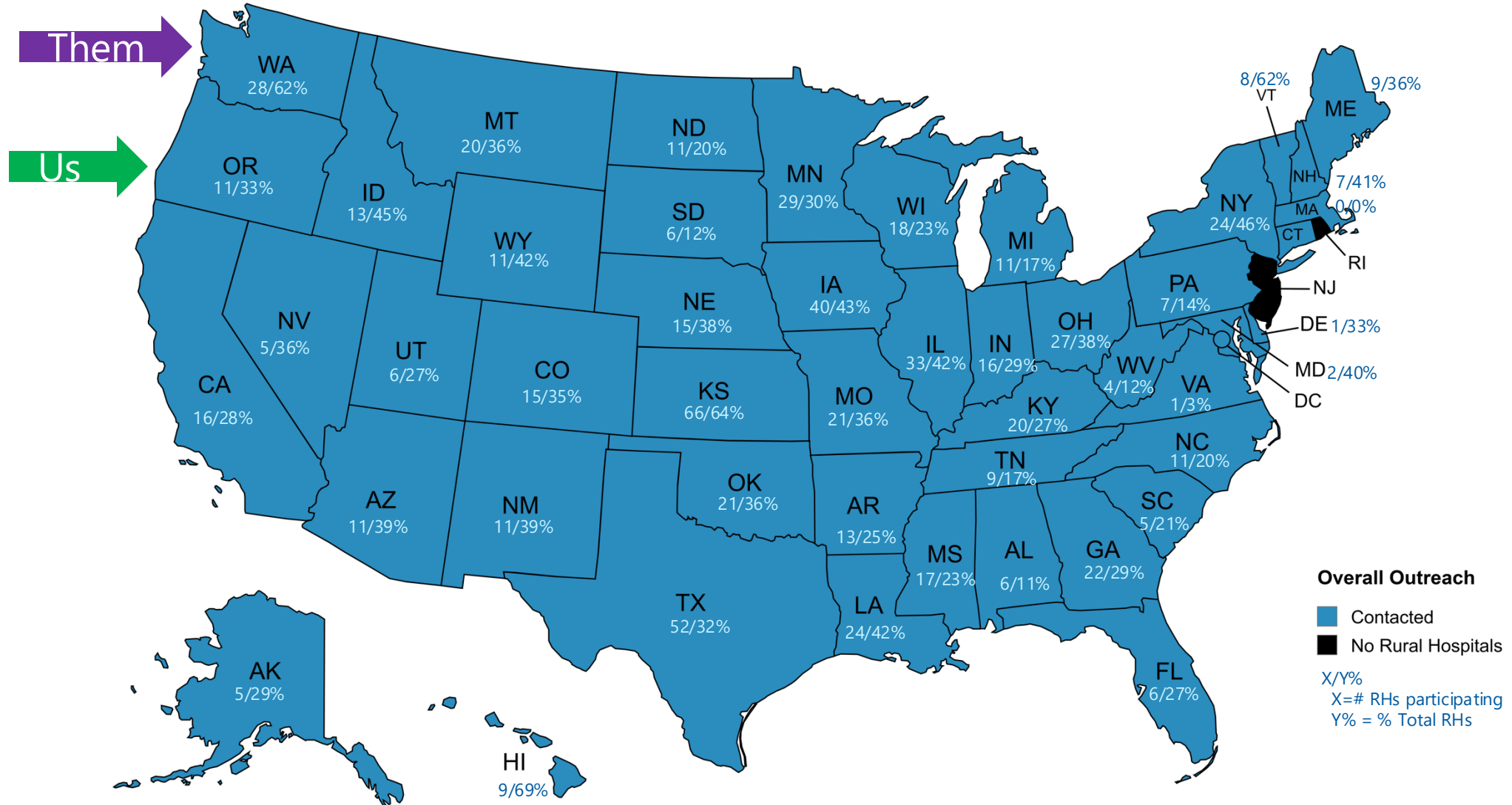
- Nonprofit pricing for independent Critical Access and Rural Emergency Hospitals
- Free Windows 10 Extended Security Update★

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/industry/health/rural-health-cyber-resiliency>

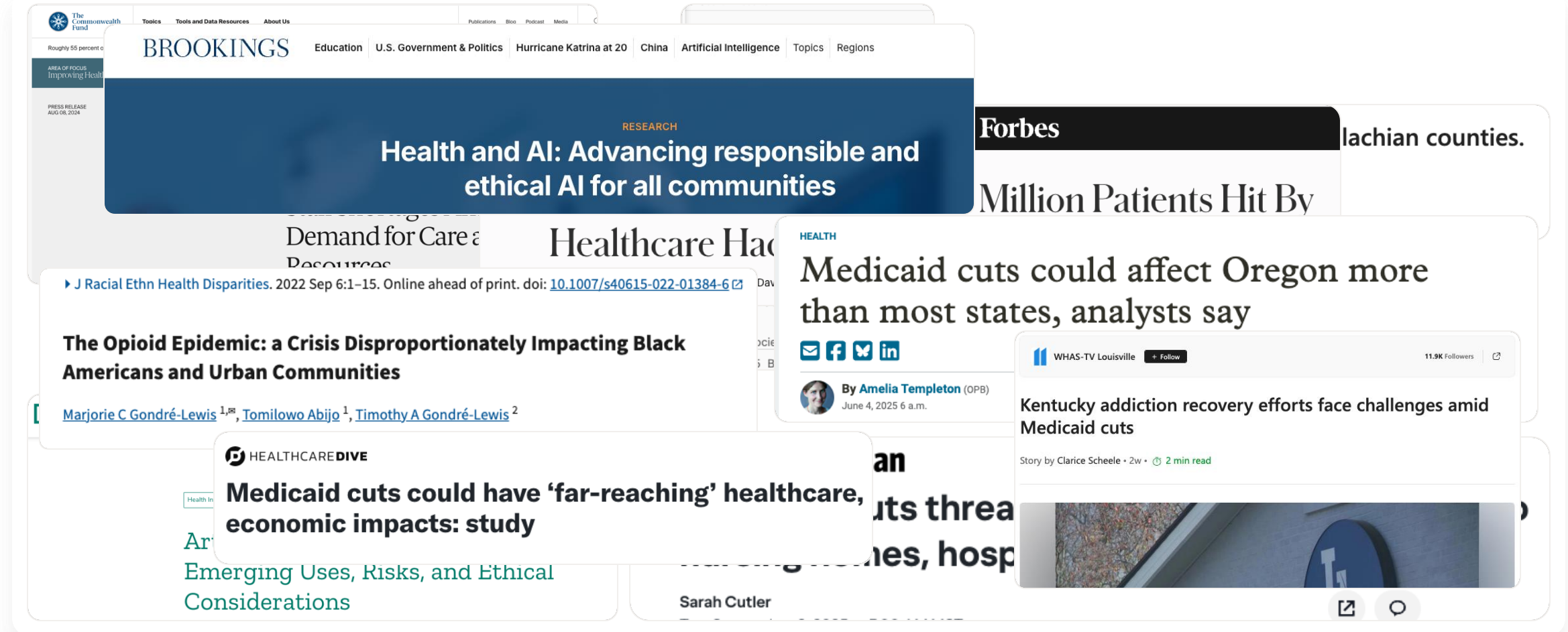
★ New offers as
of Sept 2025

Microsoft Rural Health Resiliency Program

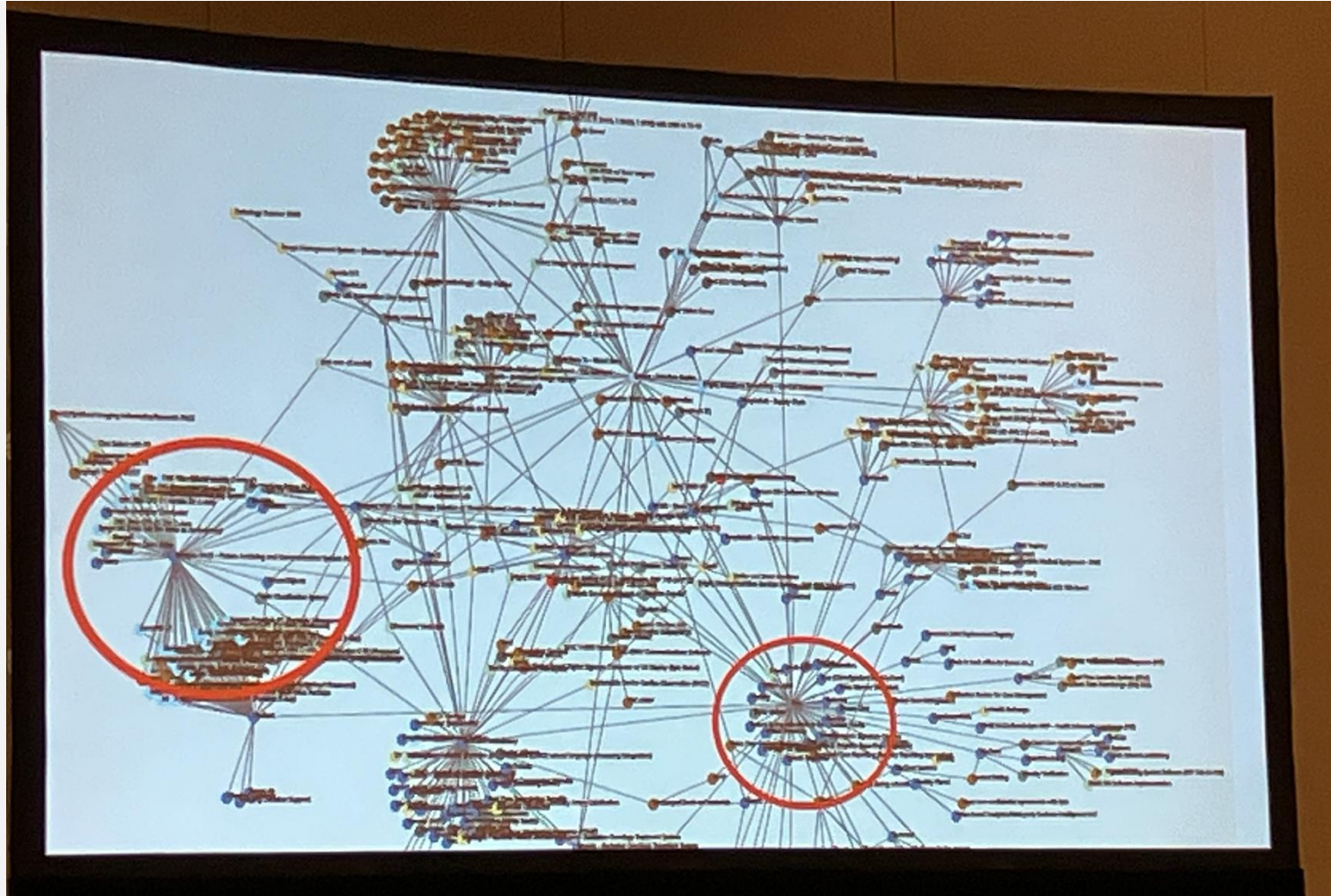
- 700+, ~32% of Rural Hospitals have registered for the program nationwide



What if we could start with a clean slate?

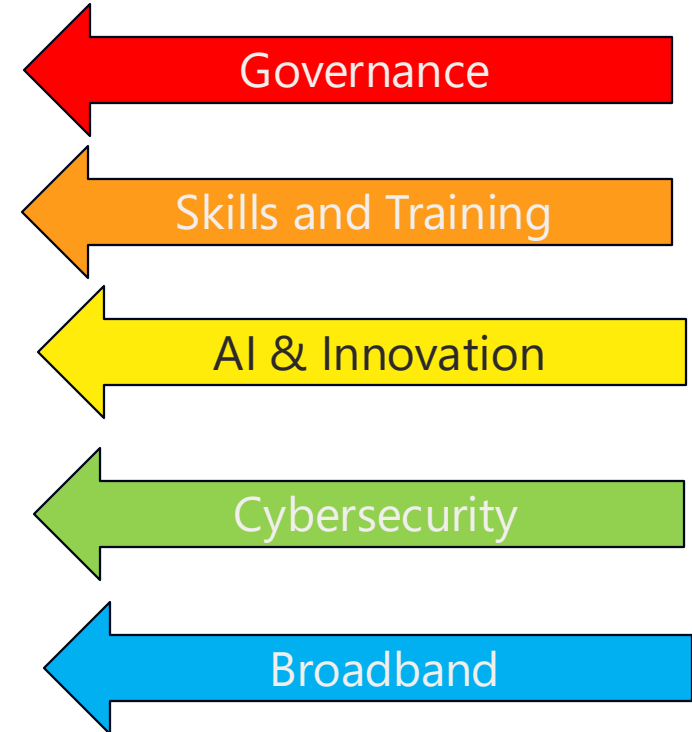


Health IT and Data – Inherently Complex



Source: John Riggi, American Hospital Association National Director Cybersecurity and Risk

A LOOK AT THE PATH FORWARD



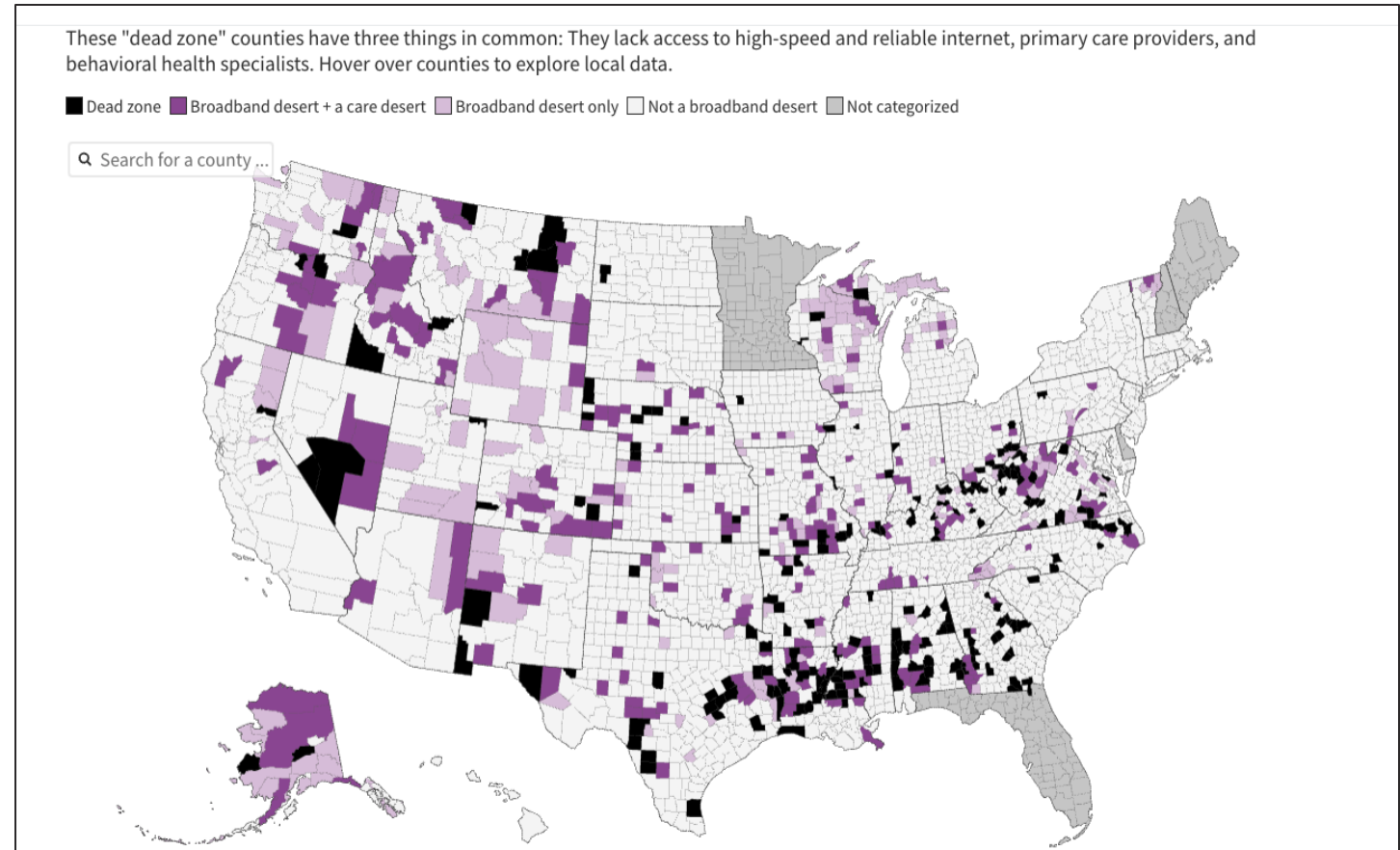


Broadband

IN THE LAND OF PLENTY...

Of the US population

- **25M** live in broadband deserts
- **75M** live in primary care and/or behavioral healthcare shortage areas
- Nearly **3M** live in the confluence: “Dead Zones” – in these ~200 counties, people are sicker and die earlier
- *These Dead Zones are expensive to wire – about \$25K per mile above ground and \$60K under ground*



A diagram featuring a large light green circle with a dark blue inner circle. The word "Cybersecurity" is written in white text within the dark blue inner circle.

Cybersecurity

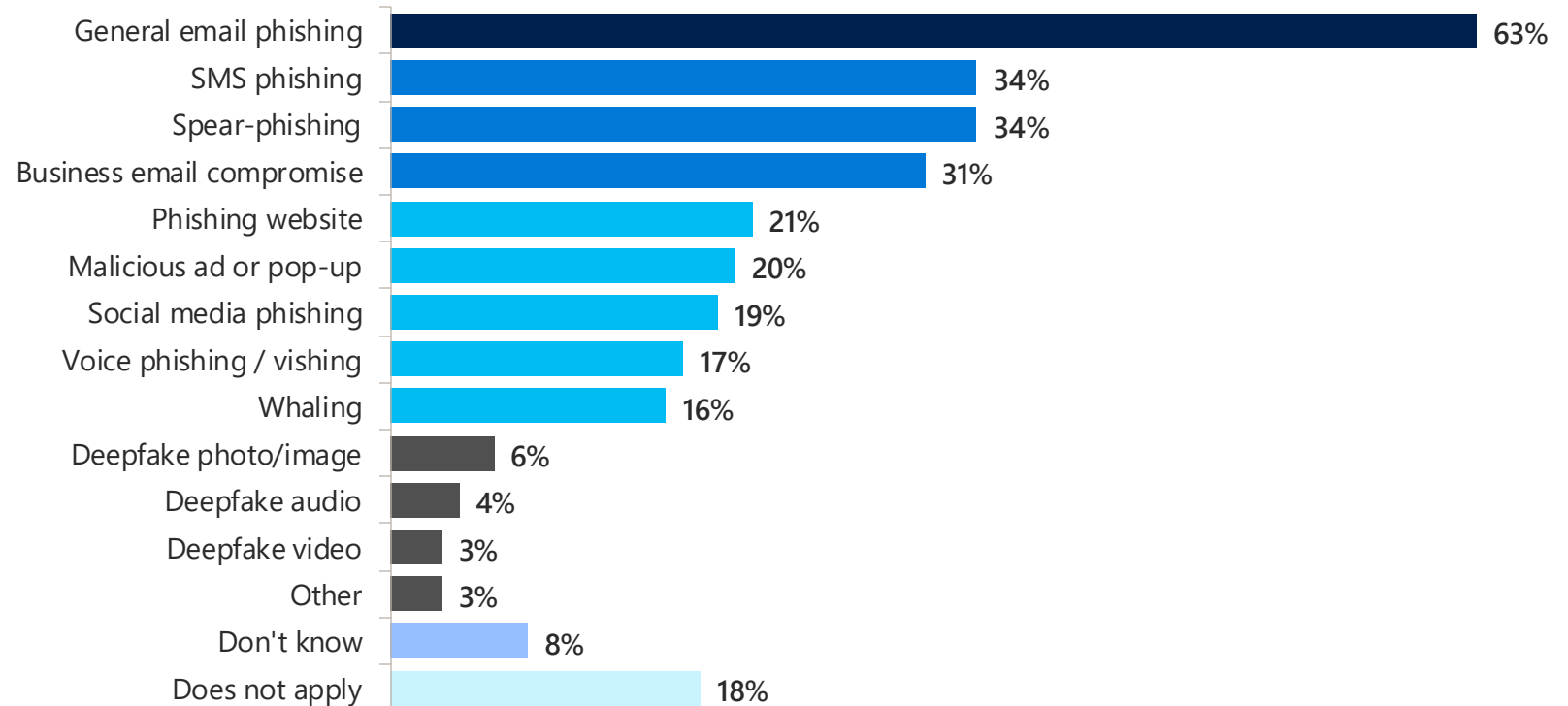
Healthcare Remains a Prime Target for Cyber Criminals

Healthcare remains a **top target**

~**35%** of HC organizations reported a cyber attack last year

63% of healthcare significant security incidents beginning with general email phishing

Figure 11: Initial Points of Compromise for Significant Security Incidents in the Past 12 Months



Cyber Resilience Lesson #1:

We're Humans – Training Remains Vital

Figure 9: Methods for Security Awareness Training

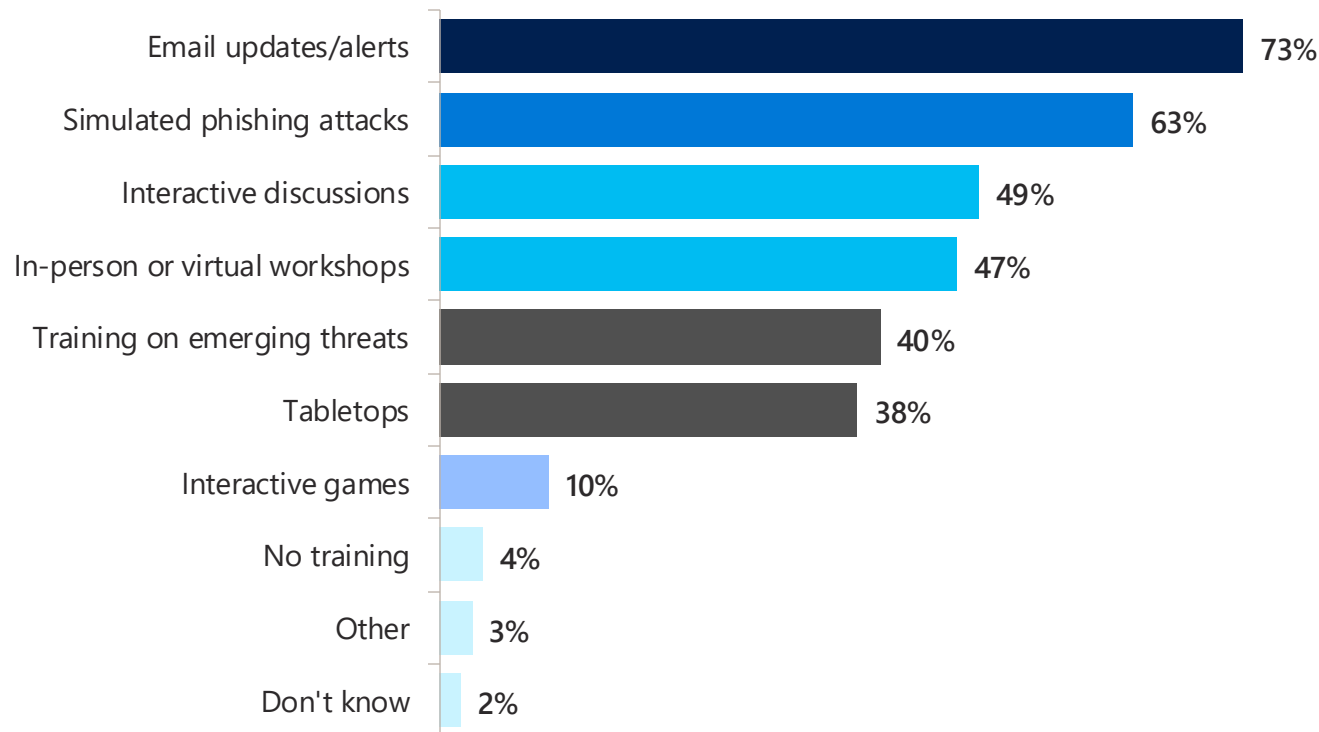
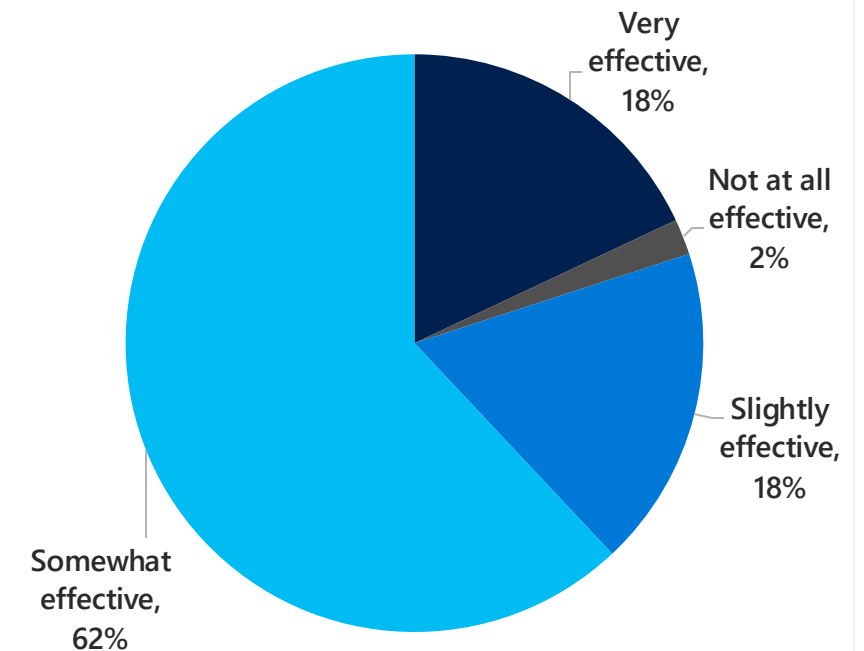


Figure 10: Effectiveness of Security Awareness Training Programs



Cyber Resilience Lesson #2:

It's a WHEN, not an IF

Figure 12: Organizations Conducting Tabletop Exercises for Incident Response Testing

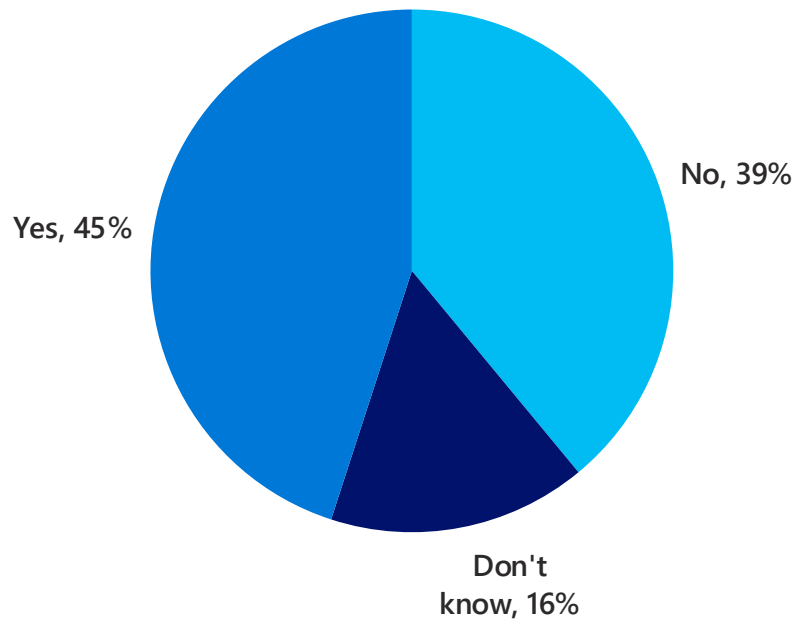
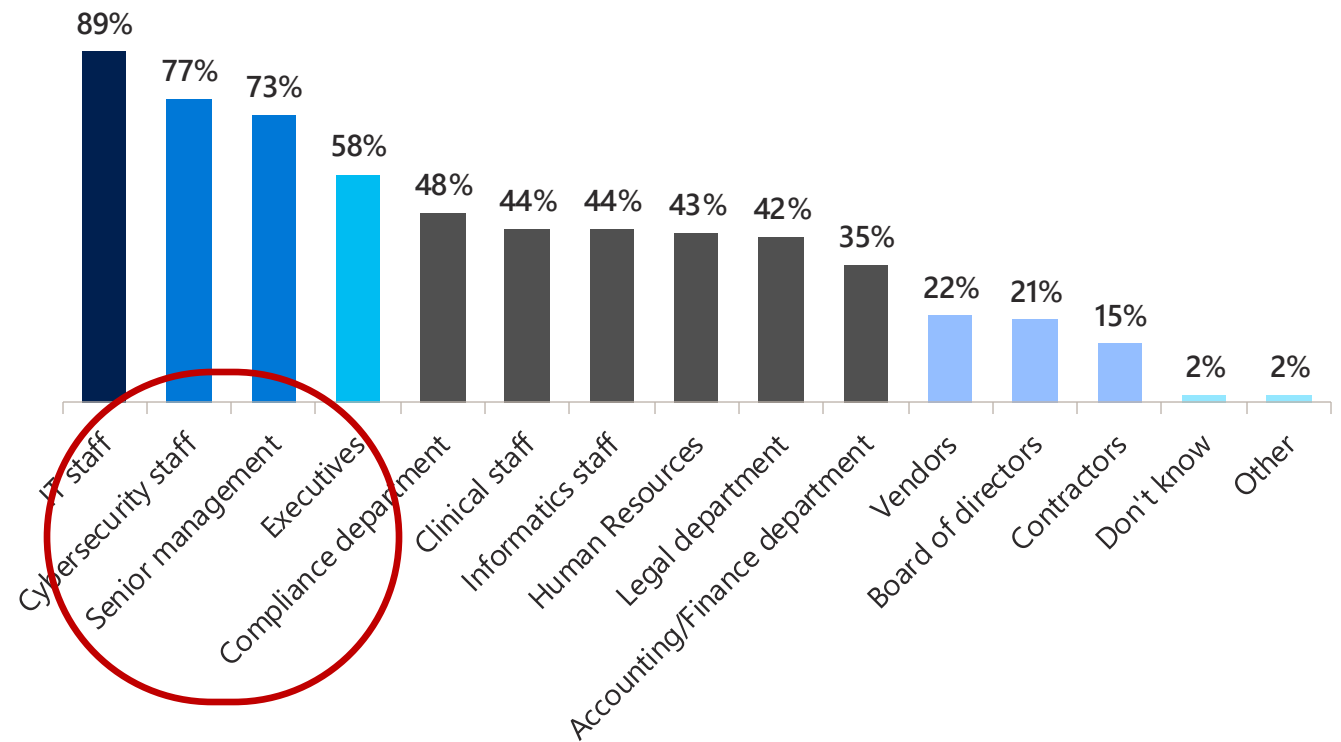


Figure 13: Tabletop Exercise Participants



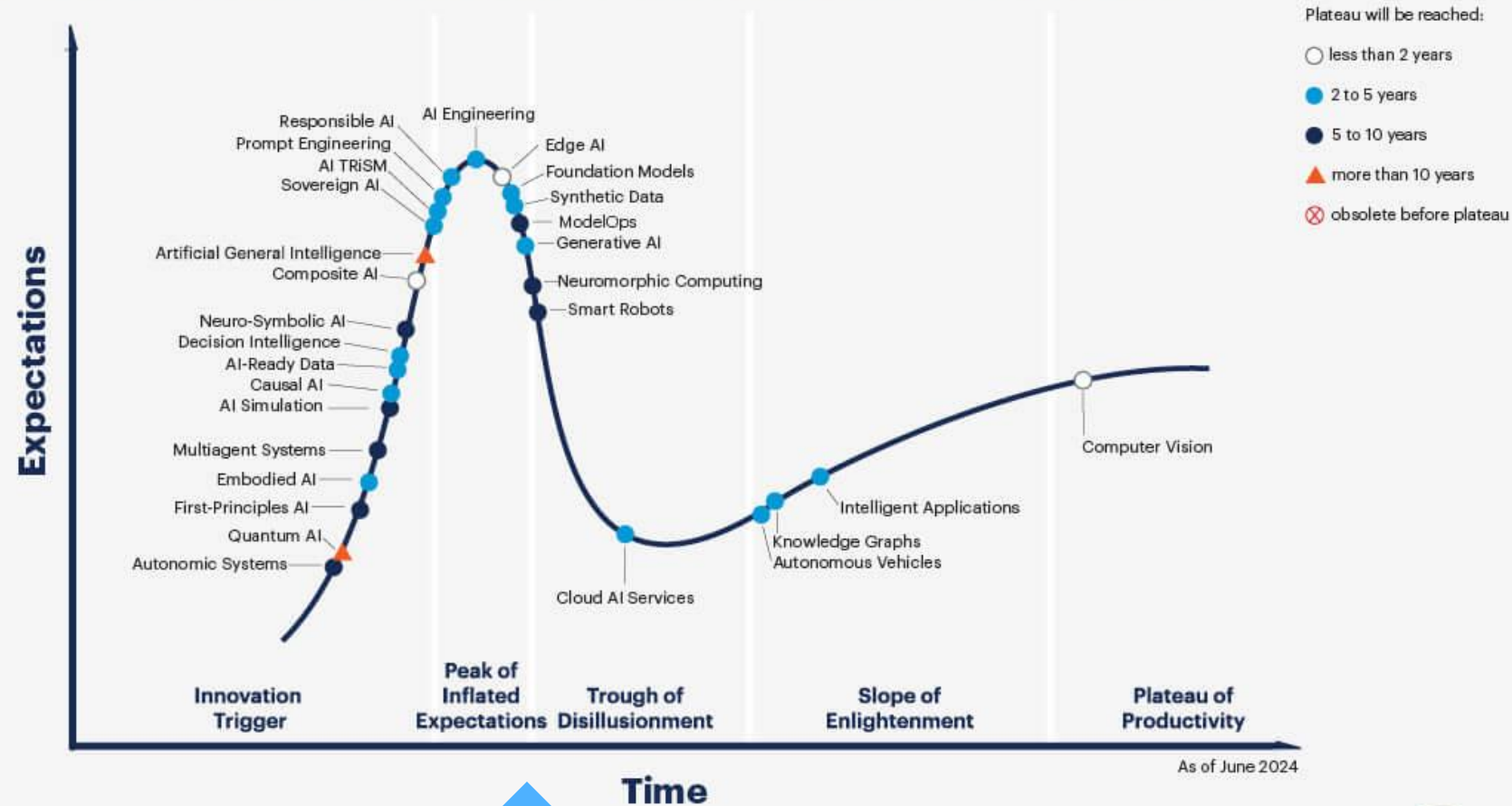
"In 2023, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center – a rural Critical Access Hospital – was the victim of a ransomware attack that disrupted operations for 11 days. All of our systems were encrypted, forcing staff to revert to paper processes in the middle of patient care. The attack underscored how ransomware in health care is not just a financial crime but a direct 'threat to life.' In a rural setting, even short interruptions can have an outsized impact on patient outcomes."

– Justin Millar, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center in Arizona

A large yellow ring centered on a dark blue background. Inside the ring, the words "Artificial Intelligence" are written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Artificial Intelligence

Hype Cycle for Artificial Intelligence, 2024



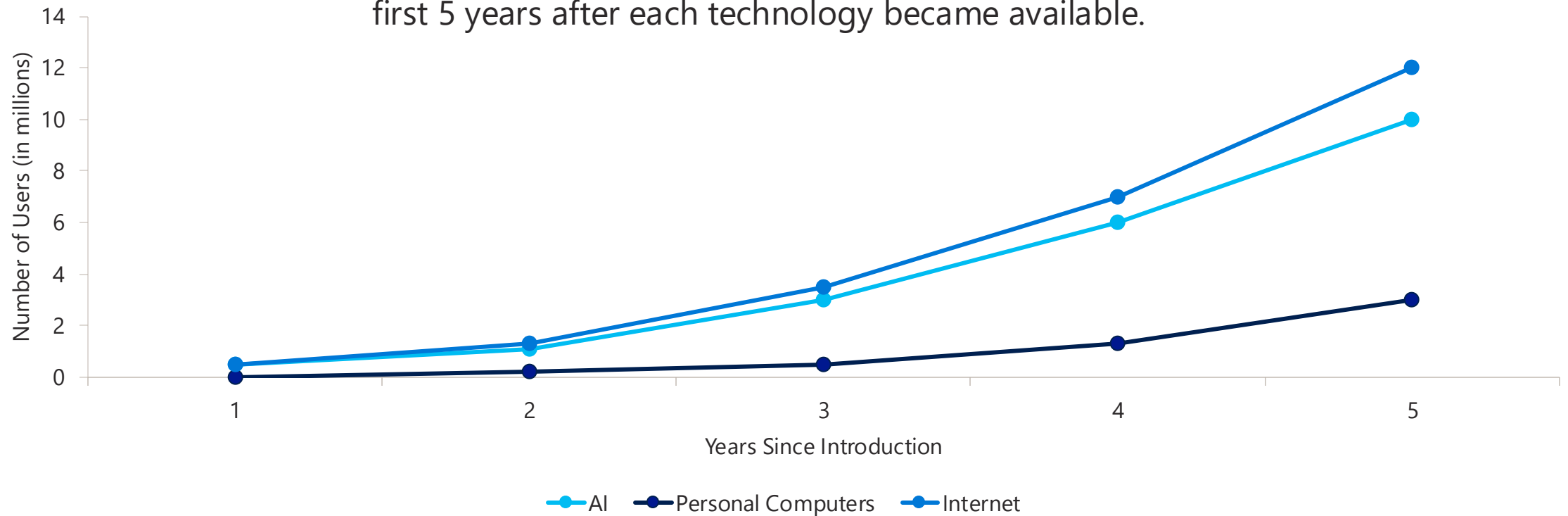
Source: Gartner
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© 2024 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. GTS_3282450

We are here

Gartner®

Remember life before the internet?

The adoption of **AI**, **personal computers**, and **the internet** over the first 5 years after each technology became available.



Today, 66% of leaders say they would not hire someone without AI skills.
([Fundraising AI](#))

Types of Modern AI



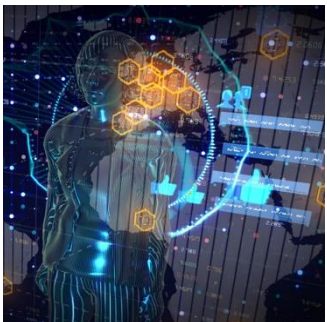
Generative AI

Generative AI learns from data to create new content like text, images, or music, demonstrating creative capabilities. *We use GenAI in everyday tasks when we interact with Siri, shop on Amazon, use Copilot for learning, etc.*



Ambient AI

Ambient AI blends into its environment, offering proactive, context-aware assistance without disrupting daily activities. *In healthcare, clinical ambient listening (Dragon Copilot, etc.) is bringing demonstrable value*



Agentic AI

Agentic AI autonomously makes decisions and learns from outcomes to achieve specific goals with minimal human input. *Agentic AI is increasingly used in chatbots and customer self service.*

AI in Healthcare



Enhanced Diagnostic Accuracy

AI improves diagnosis by analyzing medical data quickly and precisely, leading to better patient outcomes.



Streamlined Administration

AI automates administrative tasks, reducing workload and improving healthcare system efficiency.



Personalized Patient Care

AI enables tailored treatment plans by integrating patient data and predictive analytics.



Advanced Clinical Applications

AI supports robotic-assisted surgeries and early disease detection to transform healthcare delivery.

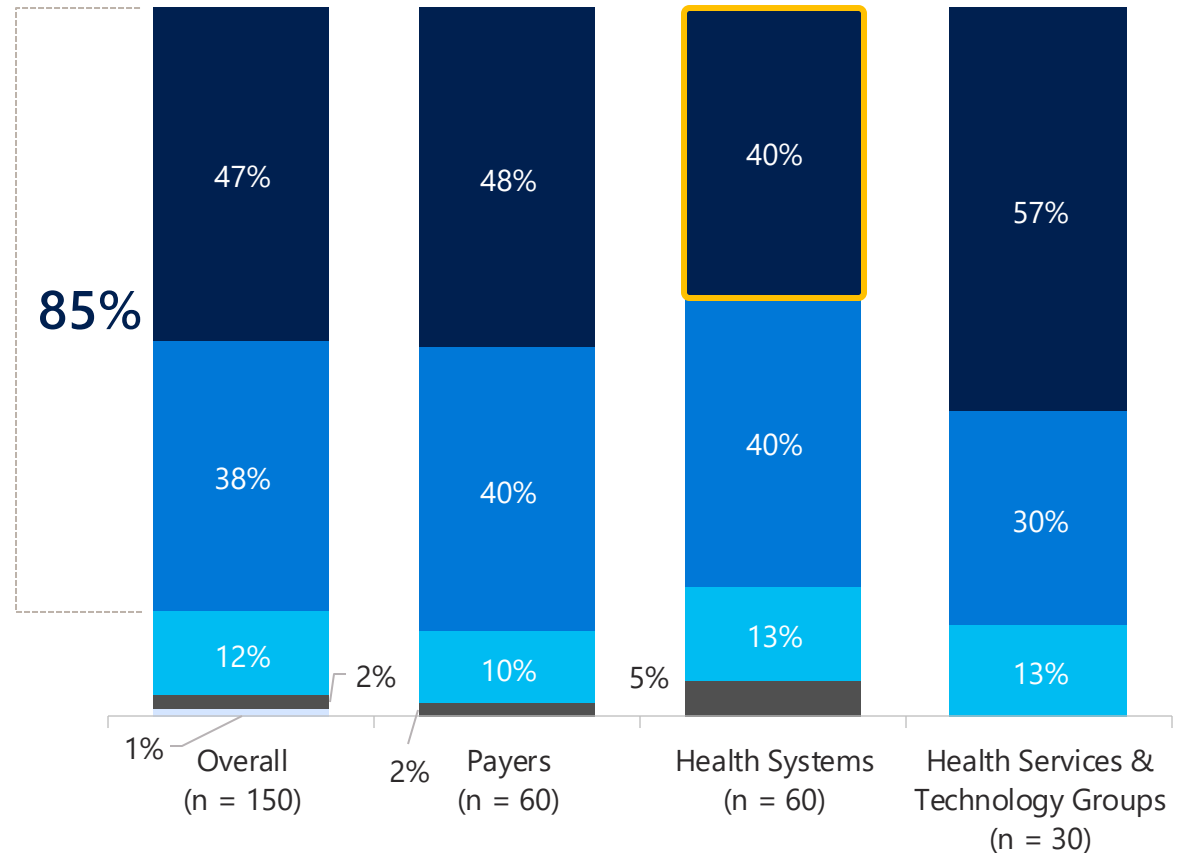


AI Adoption across Payers, Providers, and Health Tech

Most survey respondents said their organizations are pursuing gen AI initiatives or have already implemented solutions.

Breakdown of organizations' gen AI plans, Q4 2024, % of respondents

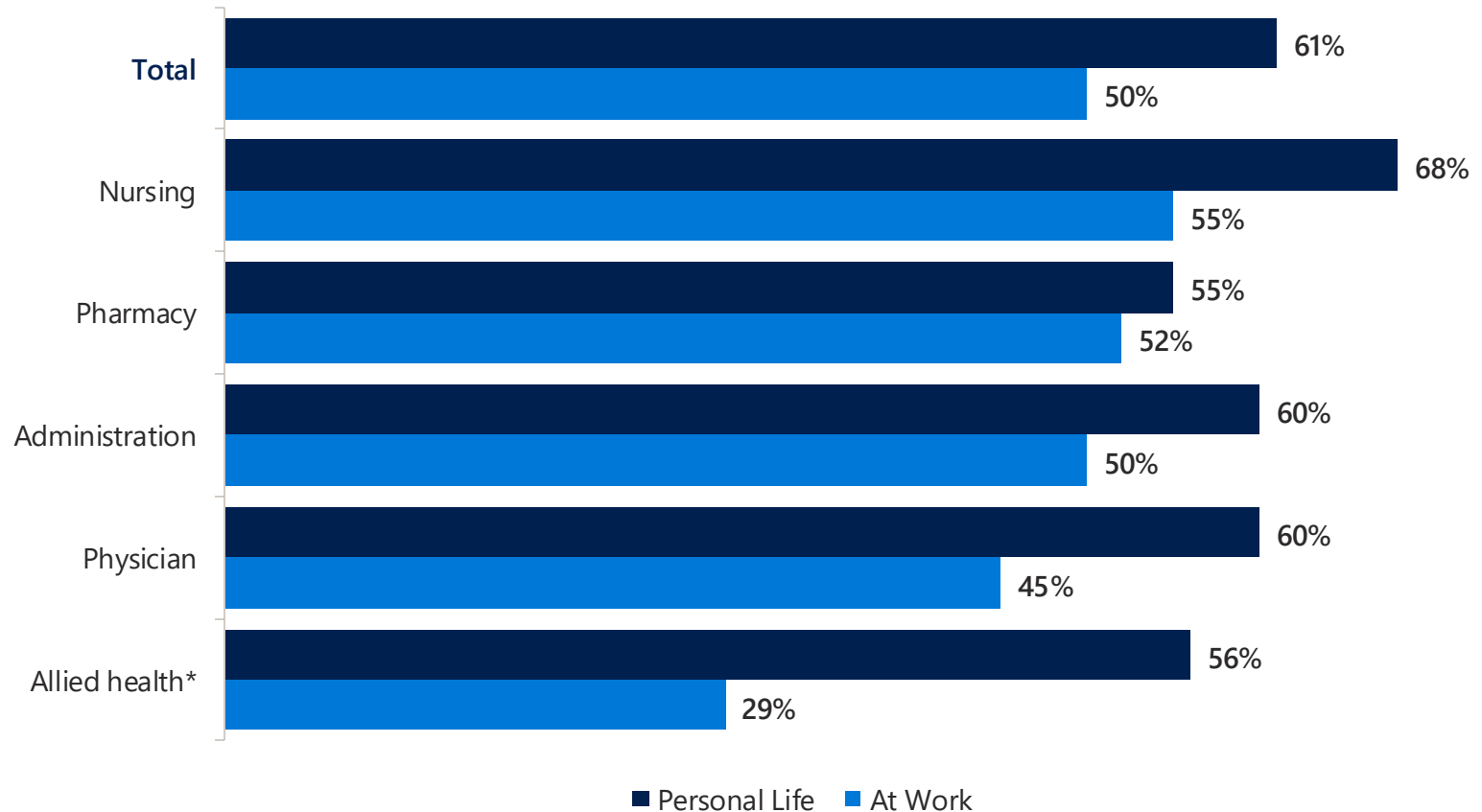
- Have already implemented GenAI
- Pursuing GenAI proofs of concept (not yet deployed)
- Plan to pursue proofs of concept this year
- Waiting to see other organizations' results first



Healthcare's AI Users – At Work vs. At Home

Healthcare professionals use of AI at work vs. at home

The percentage of healthcare professionals who use GenAI in their personal life at least once a week or multiple times per month is higher than their usage at work.



AI & Innovation: Life Saving Impact

CONCERN EWS synthesizes clinical information from an array of sources in a machine-learning algorithm to identify patient deterioration up to **42 hours earlier** than typical methods.

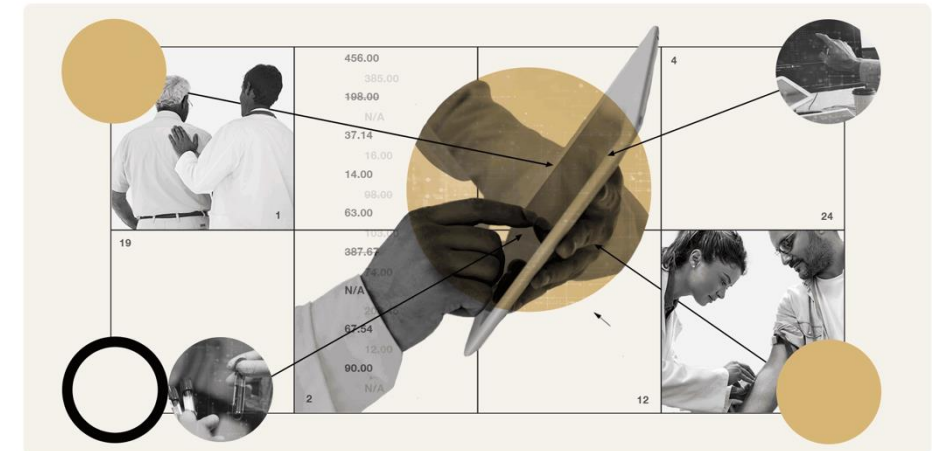
The system resulted in a **12% increase** in the number of patients who left the hospital alive.

Nurses Power AI Model to Improve Care of Hospitalized Patients

CONCERN system taps nurses' expertise to provide early warnings of patient deterioration

5 minute read

by [Chris Casey](#) | June 11, 2025



AI & Innovation: ...to the Bottom Line

Boise, Idaho-based St. Luke's Health System has generated an extra \$13,049 per clinician through the use of ambient AI, KLAS Research [reported](#).

The eight-hospital system [adopted](#) Ambience's generative AI for clinical documentation in 2024. The health IT researcher surveyed 371 users on ROI and 41 providers on burnout.

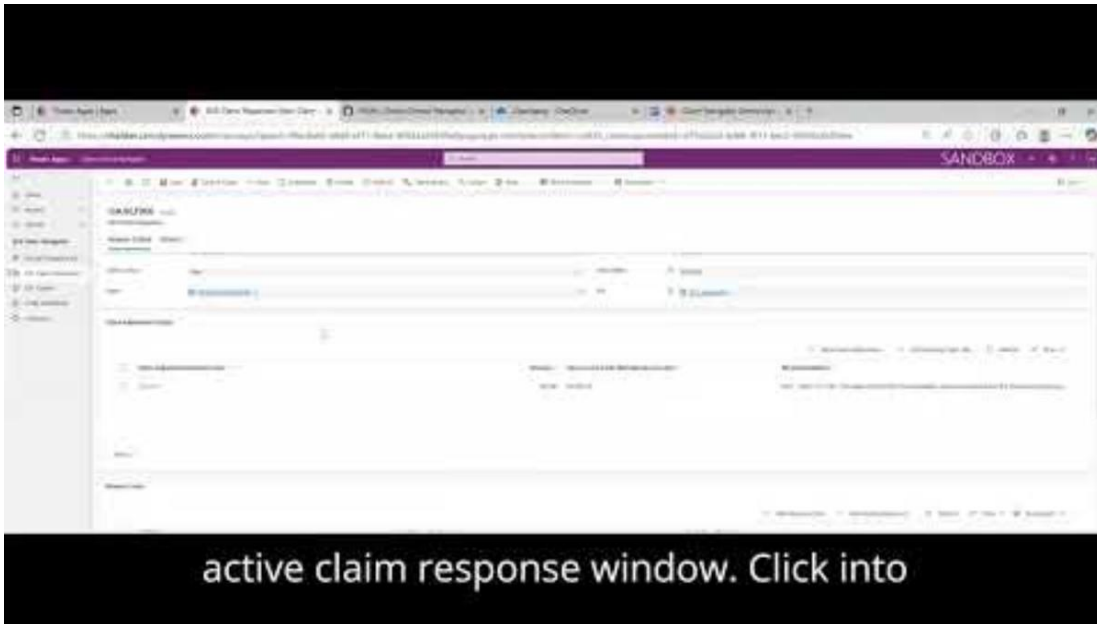
Here are seven benefits of the technology at St. Luke's, according to the June 20 [report](#):

1. \$13,049 additional revenue generated per clinician through HCC Hierarchical Condition Category capture (\$9,685) and Evaluation and Management coding improvements (\$3,363)
2. 41% reduction in active documentation time
3. 41% reduction in time to chart closure
4. 39% decrease in time spent documenting after-hours
5. 36% reduction in the number of clinicians reporting near-daily clinician burnout
6. 22% increase in patient face time
7. 17% decrease in time spent documenting after appointment date

AI & Innovation: Solving Fundamental Challenges

The [Microsoft Rural Health AI Innovation Lab \(RHAIL\)](#) is a collaboration with rural health leaders to develop pragmatic AI solutions for rural needs and catalyze AI innovation.

- Use Cases set by the voice of the customer
- Aligned with Responsible AI practices
- “Low Code/No Code” to build
- Affordable and accessible



The Claims Denials Navigator, the first ***RHAIL*** product tackles the task of resolving denied Medicare and Medicaid insurance claims.

The [RHAIL Claims Denial Navigator](#) is available for free on GitHub

- Requires minimal capacity in SharePoint, Azure, and PowerApps*
- Resides in the site's IT environment - all data stays with the organization
- EHR agnostic – no interfacing required

**These products are available through standard nonprofit offers for eligible customers*



Skills & Training

“

We see this technology
as in service of humanity,
not as a successor to it”

— *Brad Smith, Microsoft President*



MICROSOFT: PREPARING THE AI ENABLED WORKFORCE

By 2030, **59%** of the global workforce will need new digital skills.

Source: WEF Future of Jobs Report

But **75%** of youth globally don't have the skills they need for the AI economy.

Source: UNICEF/Education Commission

Microsoft Elevate is committed to expanding AI skilling globally, helping **20 million people** earn an in-demand AI skilling credential in the next 2 years.

RURAL SCHOOLS AND HEALTHCARE LAG IN AI READINESS

Gen Z Middle and High School Artificial Intelligence Policies in the Heartland

Does your school have rules about using artificial intelligence for schoolwork?

If **yes**: Are you allowed to use artificial intelligence for your schoolwork?

■ % School permits AI use in some or all circumstances ■ % School does not permit AI use ■ % School does not have clear AI policy

All Gen Z K-12 students 26 20 53

Urbanicity

Metro counties 28 22 50

Nonmetro counties 19 15 67

County median household income

Less than \$60,000 15 12 73

\$60,000 to \$69,999 29 25 47

\$70,000 to \$79,999 27 20 53

\$80,000 or more 41 24 35

Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, ±1%.

GALLUP®

Gen Z Workplace Artificial Intelligence Policies in the Heartland, by Industry

Are you allowed to use artificial intelligence for your work?

■ % Yes ■ % No ■ % AI doesn't exist for my work ■ % Don't know

All Gen Z employees 36 10 33 21

Job category

Science, technology, engineering, math workers 61 9 10 20

Education workers 59 10 12 19

Healthcare workers 10 11 44 34

Other white-collar workers 45 9 29 17

Blue-collar and service workers 17 20 44 19

*Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, ±1%.

Among employed Gen Zers

GALLUP®

READYING YOUR HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE – AND YOU!

AI Skilling for Healthcare

AI Tools and Skills Development

- ✓ [Using Copilot in Healthcare](#)
- ✓ [Chart your course using AI Skills Navigator](#)

Practical tools and learning resources to build AI skills and apply AI solutions in daily healthcare operations.

AI Strategy and Leadership

- ✓ [AI for Leaders in Healthcare](#)
- ✓ [Define your AI Strategy to Create Healthcare Value](#)

Guidance and best practices for healthcare leaders to define, plan, and drive AI transformation.

Cybersecurity Skilling for Healthcare

Cybersecurity Awareness

- ✓ [Enhance Cybersecurity for Everyone](#)
- ✓ [Earn your Free Career Essentials Certificate](#)

Basics and beyond information to keep you vigilant for cybersecurity threats and attacks – at work and at home.

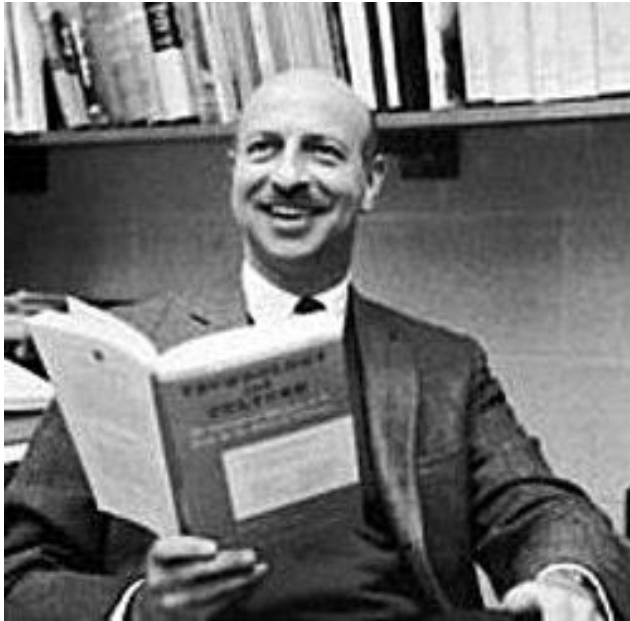
Microsoft Security and Compliance

- ✓ [Microsoft Security Documentation](#)
- ✓ [Microsoft 365 Security and Compliance](#)

Comprehensive resources and best practices for securing healthcare data and ensuring regulatory compliance.



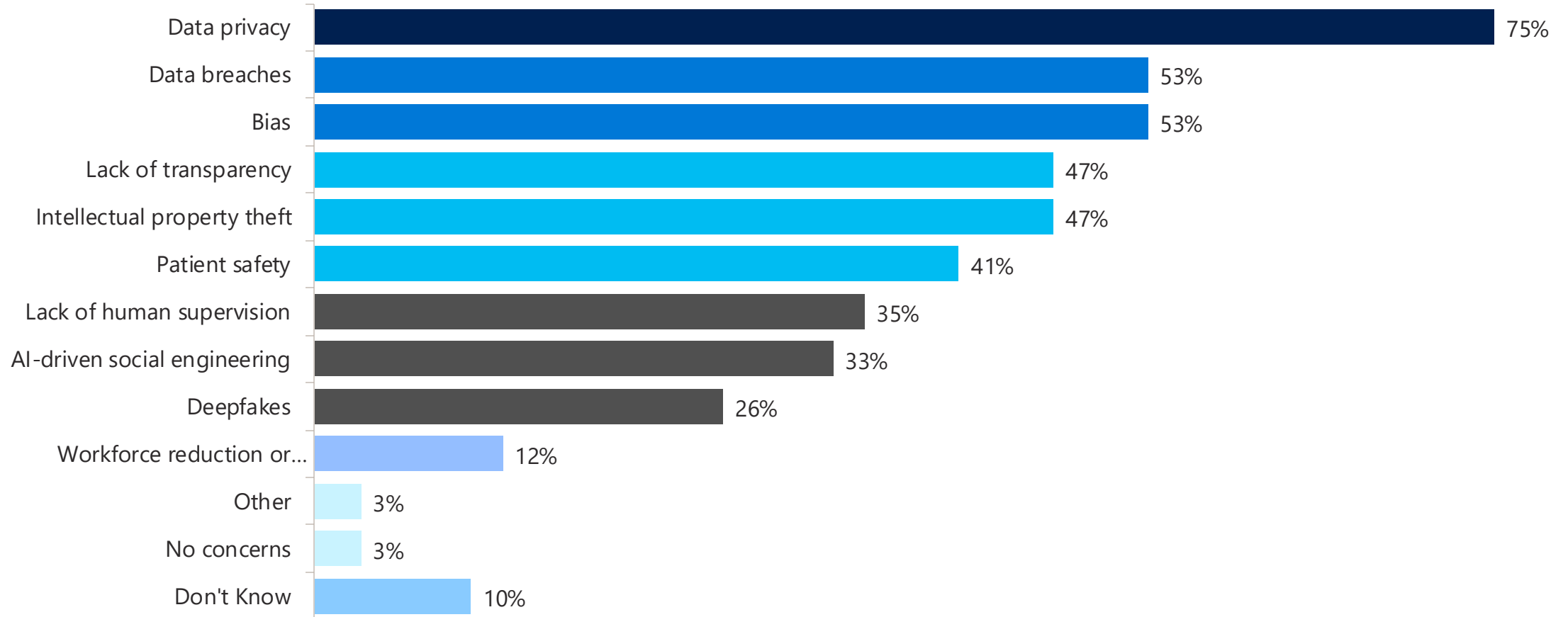
Governance



Melvin Kranzberg

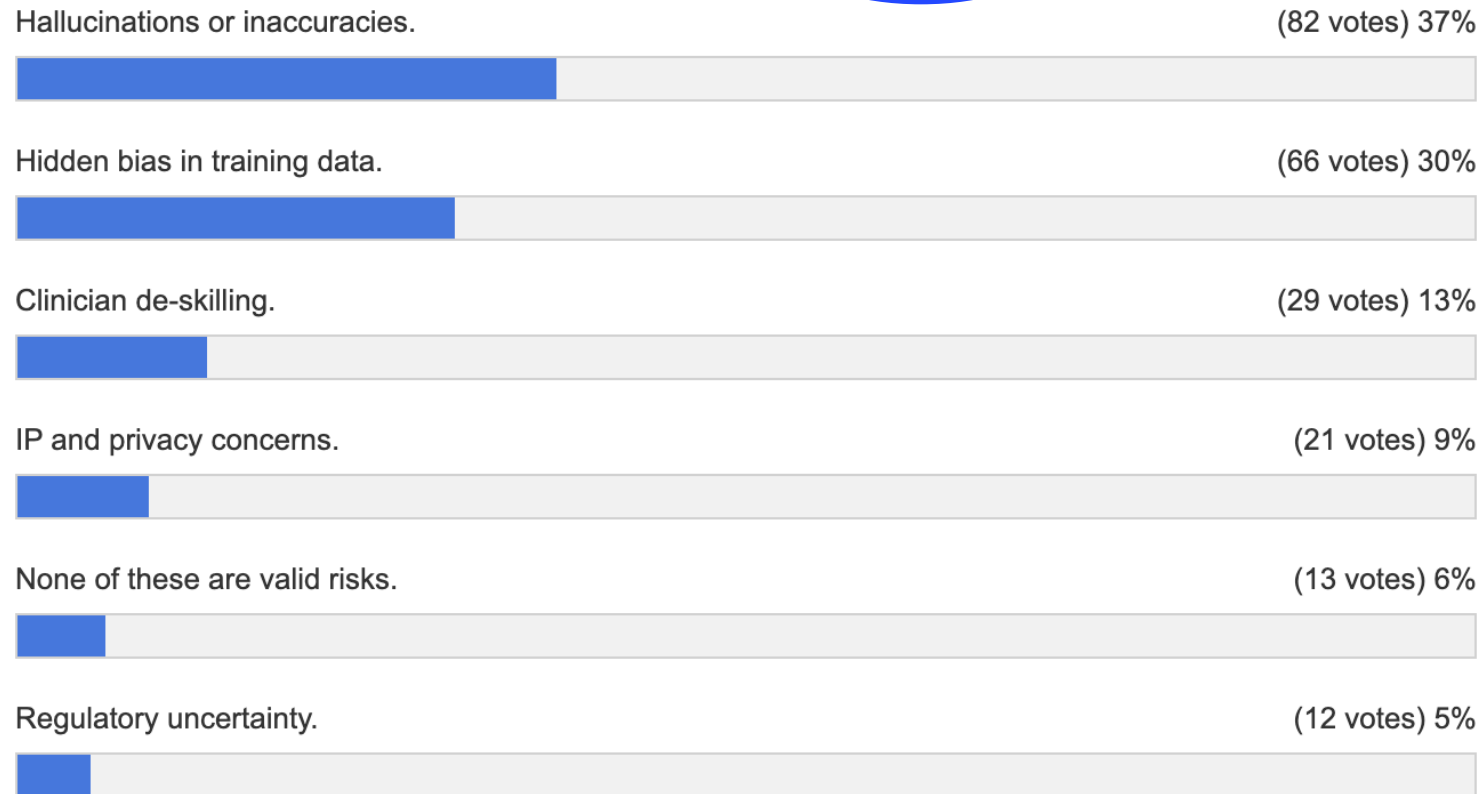
**“Technology is neither good nor bad;
nor is it neutral.”**

The cautionary side of AI



The cautionary side of AI

What risk is most often overlooked when adopting clinical AI?



Total Votes: 223

The stakes
are high in
governing AI

Pope Leo Takes On AI as a Potential Threat to Humanity

The new pope is making artificial intelligence a signature issue—but Silicon Valley is trying to win him over



WSJ



Silicon Valley AI leaders launch \$100M Leading the Future super-PAC

 BY DUNCAN RILEY

Silicon Valley artificial intelligence leaders and investors have launched a new super-PAC network focused on AI and advocating against strict AI regulation, with \$100 million put towards the effort.



HEALTHCARE GOVERNANCE IS MATURING

- **Of ~275 respondents...**
 - 50% said their organizations permit only approved AI technologies
 - 47% indicated their organizations have approval processes
 - 31% of respondents said their organizations actively monitor AI usage across systems and devices, while 52% said they do not and 17% did not know.

In Healthcare....

- 28% of respondents whose organizations use AI report their **CEO** is responsible for overseeing AI governance
- 17% say AI governance is overseen by their **board** of directors.
- In many cases, AI governance is jointly owned by two leaders

Getting Started with AI Governance

The question very often is not what AI can do, it's what AI *should* do.

Effective AI Governance addresses crucial questions, including:

1. What strategic goals might AI support?
2. Who is responsible for enabling AI value and avoiding risk & harm?
3. How do we track AI's value and contributions to those goals?
4. How will we hold ourselves accountable?

Getting Started with AI Governance, Cont.

1

Deploying AI Tools – Focus on Value and Validity

- Deploy AI and agents in **low-risk** areas to build trust before expanding into more complex workflows
- Encourage **every team** to build small, AI-enabled tools that solve real problems.
- Establish technical **guardrails** to help ensure AI stays within scope and flag questionable output for human review.

2

Recognize AI as a massive change management undertaking

- Understand the tools and skill sets.
- Educate your teams
- Use early experiments to uncover cultural resistance, skill gaps, and technical friction
- Start fresh. Don't modernize the old operating model; invent a new one.
- Track outcomes, when something works, codify it into templates others can use.

3

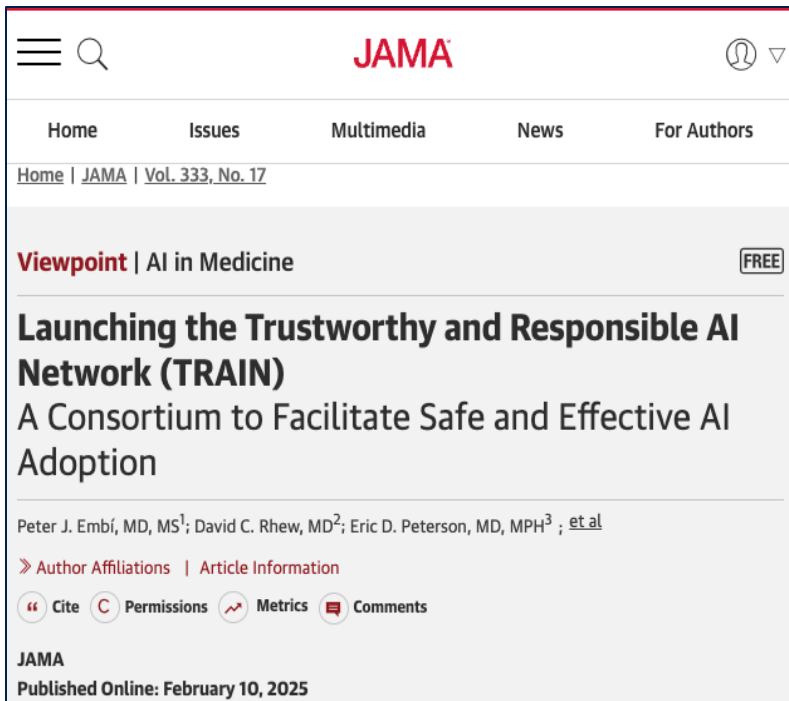
Find the Balance

- Support your people through change. Rapid transformation creates stress
- We often forget to ask “whether people like efficiency as much as economic theory believes they do.”
- *It turns out many customers still want to talk to real people*

Resources for AI Governance

TRAIN

supports HCOs in implementing AI in a trustworthy and responsible fashion



The screenshot shows the JAMA website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Issues', 'Multimedia', 'News', and 'For Authors'. Below this, a search bar and the JAMA logo are visible. The main content area features a 'Viewpoint | AI in Medicine' section with a 'FREE' badge. The article title is 'Launching the Trustworthy and Responsible AI Network (TRAIN)' with the subtitle 'A Consortium to Facilitate Safe and Effective AI Adoption'. The authors listed are Peter J. Embí, MD, MS¹; David C. Rhew, MD²; Eric D. Peterson, MD, MPH³; et al. At the bottom, there are links for 'Cite', 'Permissions', 'Metrics', and 'Comments'. The footer indicates 'JAMA Published Online: February 10, 2025'.



Offers rural health digital leaders a dedicated forum to connect, share solutions, and drive innovation in the communities they serve.

"AI Governance Toolkit"

- Strategy
- Policy
- Governance Model
- Use Case Management



AI is advancing at a pace that far exceeds most organizations' ability to adapt...

A Guide to Building Change Resilience in the Age of AI

by Karim R. Lakhani, Jen Stave, Douglas Ng and Daniel Martines

July 29, 2025



RURAL HEALTH COMMUNITY

Program resources for building rural health resiliency

BACKGROUND

Non-profit forum for Rural Healthcare IT Leaders to connect, share solutions and drive innovation for rural health.

Partnered with Microsoft Elevate and other industry collaborators

MISSION

Bring high value, innovative programs and offers to rural health.

- Advocate in support of rural health technology needs
- Provide access to cost-effective digital solutions for rural health
 - Business and Clinical Solutions
 - Satellite Service
 - Others on horizon
- Foster relationships and collaboration



Join the Rural Health Community

It's free to be a member!



<https://ruralhealthcommunity.org/>

AI GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT



Overview

A free AI Governance Toolkit built specifically for Rural Hospitals, Rural Health Clinics, and FQHCs and other rural health providers to enable AI Innovation, foster oversight and empower responsible adoption, including:

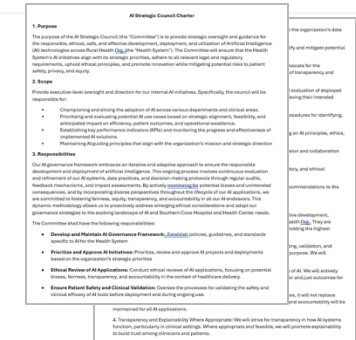
Components

- ✓ AI Governance Charter template - roles, responsibilities, and a framework for ethical decision-making
- ✓ Best practices guiding principles to ensure the safe, effective, and ethical deployment of AI
- ✓ Policies for compliant internal use of AI tools, mitigating risk and fostering trust
- ✓ A centralized "AI App Tracker" to streamline the entire AI project lifecycle, from use case approval and prioritization to tracking success metrics and business impact

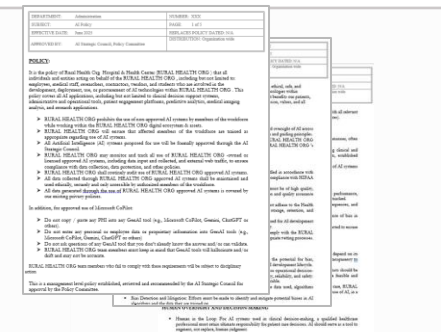
Toolkit will soon be available at ruralhealthcommunity.org

TOOLKIT COMPONENTS

GOVERNANCE CHARTER & GUIDING PRINCIPLES



AI POLICIES



USE CASE CATALOG

AI Use Case GUID AutoNumber / GUID	-	A unique identifier automatically assigned to each submitted use case.
Name	Text	A concise title that describes the use case at a high level.
Submitted By	Lookup (Contacts or User)	The name or email of the person or organization submitting the use case.
Created On	Date/Time	The date the use case was submitted.
Use Case Summary	Multiline Text	A short, plain-language explanation of the use case.
Detailed Description	Multiline Text	A more comprehensive narrative of the problem, context, and how AI would help.

AI APP TRACKER



IN BETA TESTING!



Questions & Discussion

