# Insights from AI expert Harvey Castro on the future of healthcare



In a recent interview with "Health Tech Newspaper," Harvey Castro, an accomplished AI expert and current chief medical AI officer for Helpp.ai, shared his insights on the evolving landscape of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare. His role includes advising the Singaporean Ministry of Health on leveraging AI to enhance patient care and streamline healthcare operations.

Castro, who boasts over 20 years of experience in emergency medicine, discussed his dual focus on medical practice and AI entrepreneurship. He founded his own healthcare system, scaling it to 350 employees across eight locations and establishing staffing and billing companies. This journey provided him with invaluable insights into the operational challenges faced by healthcare professionals. His notable expertise was highlighted in his TED Talk on "How AI and Humans Can Revolutionise Medicine Together."

During the interview, Castro underscored the urgency of addressing workforce shortages in healthcare, predicting a global shortfall of 10 million healthcare workers by 2030. He stated, "That’s why I see health tech as a magic bullet to bridge this gap." He cited the Apple Watch as a precursor to proactive healthcare, envisioning a future where data is harnessed to detect health risks before they manifest significantly, shifting the paradigm from reactive to proactive care.

Moreover, Castro emphasized the role of AI in enhancing patient engagement. He elaborated on customising health messaging to fit individual needs, stating, "I could tailor it to have a British accent, or if someone’s hard of hearing I could show the AI using sign language, really personalising their care." He shared a recent project focused on improving communication with younger patients, where complex discharge instructions were turned into accessible formats, such as colouring books and comic strips.

Addressing the broad implications of digital and AI technologies in healthcare, Castro pointed to the significance of predictive analytics. He explained how such tools can help identify emerging health threats, such as new strains of the flu, thereby allowing healthcare systems to prepare adequately in advance. He noted, "If I know there’s an outbreak, I know I need to get certain supplies and medicine in place ready, or call in extra doctors and staff before the outbreak hits us."

Castro’s insights into app development highlighted the necessity of addressing core pain points within healthcare. He cited the development of a stroke scale app and a reminder system for healthcare professionals to keep their credentials updated, asserting that successful healthcare apps stem from a deep understanding of the clinician's perspective.

A significant aspect of Castro’s role involves shaping Singapore's digital transformation in healthcare. He praised the government's commitment to AI integration, stating, "The government is leading when it comes to backing AI in their healthcare system. They’re so united when moving things forward." He noted a recent initiative to retrain citizens over the age of 40 in AI skills, which he regarded as a progressive step towards fostering innovation and facilitating the integration of AI across the country.

Looking into the future, Castro predicted that humanoid robots would become pivotal in healthcare settings by 2026-2027, aiding with physical tasks that typically burden human staff. He explained, "With humanoid robots, the robot could do the heavy lifting for them, taking that physical strain away from physicians." He expressed optimism about AI enhancing robotic capabilities, enabling these machines to capture details during consultations that may be overlooked by healthcare professionals.

In concluding thoughts on the intersection of AI and digital health, Castro highlighted the need for tailored approaches in different countries. "It’s important that we have our own models, created by our own institutes, with our own local data; that way it’s really representing the population," he remarked. He also addressed concerns regarding job displacement within the healthcare workforce, reinforcing the idea that the human element remains indispensable. "You’re not going to lose your job, because that human touch you bring is too important," he stated.

Castro's engaging discourse provides a glimpse into the transformative potential of AI within healthcare and the strategic efforts underway in Singapore to integrate innovative technologies into medical practice. His insights serve as a foundation for understanding the ongoing evolution in healthcare systems worldwide.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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