

Joint AI plan for the safe and effective use of AI in the Norwegian health and care services 2024 - 2025

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KAPITTEL 2

Summary

The National Health and Coordination Plan 2024-2027 notes that *artificial intelligence (AI) could make a substantial contribution to the sustainable development of our shared health service*. AI can help to automate tasks and improve work processes, which will be essential in addressing future challenges relating to health personnel capacity and service quality.

The Directorate of Health has been tasked with leading the work to facilitate the safe introduction of AI within the health and care services. This will be done in cooperation with the Medical Products Agency, the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, the regional health authorities and KS.

The overarching goal of the plan is to increase the use of safe and effective AI systems in the health and care services. This will contribute to services that are of equal or better quality and free up time among healthcare professionals. The plan includes both clinical and non-clinical applications, with an emphasis on realising benefits through the effective implementation of AI technology.

The principal direction of the plan:

- **Supporting the needs of the service:** The measures must support the needs of municipalities and health authorities. The involvement of patients and health professionals will be important in selecting relevant AI applications.
- **Medically appropriate, ethical and safe use** will be essential to ensure trust among healthcare professionals and patients. This includes preventing bias in AI systems that could lead to unfair treatment outcomes.
- **Greater use of AI:** The plan emphasises the increased clinical use of AI and risk mitigation measures to ensure safe use. There is also considerable potential for the use of AI in administrative functions, such as documentation and planning.

- **Use of commercial AI products:** The procurement and use of commercial AI products is considered to be a fast-track way to reap benefits in the health service. The plan places less emphasis on research and development concerning AI products.
- **Estimate and realise benefits:** Emphasis is placed on clarifying and highlighting the benefits of using AI, including learning from other sectors and countries.
- **Increased competence:** Increased competence concerning digital transformation and AI is needed among managers, health professionals and citizens alike to gain trust and ensure that AI solutions are used appropriately.
- **European cooperation:** Cooperation within the EU and Nordic countries is important to adapt, contribute to and benefit from experiences and resources.
- **Clear authorities:** From the government's perspective, clear frameworks, common guidelines, guidance, guides, standards and competence are important factors in building trust in the technology.

The structure of the plan is based on the following focus areas and measures for achieving the overall goals:

- **Sector collaboration concerning AI:** Creation of an AI council to provide strategic advice. Arrange thematic seminars to share experiences and clarify needs, measures and responsibilities. Assess the need for changes in areas of responsibility and strengthen European cooperation.
- **Cross-border information pages about AI:** Further develop cross-agency information pages that publish guidance, knowledge summaries and other relevant information.
- **Cross-agency regulatory guidance:** Continue guidance concerning current regulations and prepare for impending EU regulations, such as the AI Regulation and European Health Data Space (EHDS).
- **Framework for the use of AI:** Prepare a report on the quality assurance of AI and engage the healthcare sector in relevant standardisation work. Recommended topics on validation, benefits, funding, access to data and infrastructures, which are discussed and specified in the seminar series.
- **Use of large language models:** Prepare a knowledge base. Risk assessments for the use of large language models. Adapt language models to Norwegian conditions. Recommended topics on the use, development and fine-tuning of large language models, which are discussed and specified in the seminar series.
- **Strengthening AI competence:** Further develop knowledge and competence and prepare a report setting out recommendations aimed at meeting competence needs for digital transformation using AI.

The plan emphasises a flexible approach, where measures are regularly prioritised and initiated based on the needs and strategic goals of the healthcare sector. The measures must support the needs of the primary and specialist healthcare services, ensure the safe and effective use of AI, and realise benefits through competence enhancement and European cooperation. At the same time, the plan must also be sufficiently flexible to enable it to be adapted to the rapid development in technology, new challenges and opportunities that arise during the period covered by the plan.

This joint AI plan for 2024-2025 is a holistic plan aimed at ensuring the safe and effective use of artificial intelligence in the health and care services. Through collaboration, competence development and a clear framework and guidelines for implementation, the plan will help improve service quality, streamline work processes and meet future challenges in the healthcare sector. In addition, greater awareness concerning ethical use and increased European cooperation could help to ensure that the technology is used in a responsible manner that builds trust among health professionals and patients.

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