Physician Introduces AI Tool That Converts Doctor-Patient Conversations into Medical Notes

An AI tool named *MyClinico*, which listens to conversations between doctors and patients and converts them into structured medical notes, is now being used at Damak Children's Hospital. The physician who introduced this technology is Dr. Prakash Paudel.

By Sagar Budhathoki
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Bringing Innovation to Nepal's Healthcare System

Dr. Prakash Paudel, a specialist in Clinical Informatics and Internal Medicine at the University of Massachusetts, had long aspired to contribute meaningfully to Nepal. During times of crisis in Nepal, he and a group of friends would raise funds to support victims— whether of natural disasters or the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past decade in the U.S., Dr. Paudel has supported various relief efforts across Nepal's diverse regions—mountains, hills, and plains. However, he felt that financial aid alone was not enough.

Driven by a desire to make a long-term impact, especially in the healthcare sector, Dr. Paudel sought a more sustainable way to contribute. His turning point came during a conversation with Dr. Bhagwan Koirala, who was leading the initiative to establish the Kathmandu Institute of Child Health (KIOCH). Inspired by this mission, Dr. Paudel and like-minded colleagues founded *KIOCH Partners of America* (K-PALS), a nonprofit registered in the U.S. in 2021.

K-PALS successfully raised approximately NPR 60 million (around USD 450,000) from the Nepali diaspora, primarily to support infrastructure development. "I feel fortunate to work with such dedicated partners in K-PALS," says Dr. Paudel.

But their efforts didn't stop there. Dr. Paudel, who had been studying artificial intelligence (AI), proposed transferring relevant technology to Nepal. With support from K-PALS, he introduced *MyClinico*, an AI-powered tool designed to enhance healthcare delivery. The tool was officially launched at Damak Children's Hospital under the KIOCH umbrella.

A Digital Assistant for Doctors

According to Dr. Paudel, *MyClinico* is an AI tool that listens to conversations between doctors and patients and automatically generates medical notes. Its core strength lies in its ability to analyze spoken interactions—even in Nepali—and produce structured documentation, saving physicians valuable time.

In Nepal, doctors often face high patient volumes and limited time, which can compromise the quality of documentation and, consequently, diagnosis and treatment. The manual process of interviewing patients and writing notes adds to the pressure.

Dr. Paudel explains that *MyClinico* helps alleviate this burden. "This AI tool acts as a physician's assistant—it eliminates the need for doctors to manually write lengthy medical histories," he says.

The tool is based on machine learning, meaning its performance improves with continued use. At Damak Children's Hospital, it has already demonstrated up to 80% effectiveness.

Doctors can edit the AI-generated notes, adding or removing details as needed, which minimizes errors. "Digitally recorded medical histories can significantly aid future treatment," Dr. Paudel adds.

Structured Health Data for Better Policy

While this technology is new to Nepal, similar tools are already in use in hospitals abroad. *MyClinico* is not free, but K-PALS covers the cost for 40 doctors at the children's hospital. Dr. Paudel notes that the company offers the tool at a discounted rate for countries like Nepal, and additional services can be added as usage grows.

Accurate medical histories are essential for diagnosis, treatment, research, and policy-making. However, in Nepal, such data is rarely systematically recorded. Most hospitals and clinics do not maintain comprehensive records of patients' conditions, treatments, or expenses, making research and evidence-based policymaking difficult.

MyClinico captures data such as patient age, disease type, geographic location, treatment duration, and cost. "This data can help improve care quality and inform health policy," Dr. Paudel says.

The tool also allows doctors to create disease-specific templates—for example, cardiologists and gastroenterologists can use different formats. Templates can vary for new versus returning patients, making it easier to maintain detailed medical histories.

Moreover, when multiple patients present similar symptoms, the tool can detect patterns based on geography, age, and disease type. This helps identify potential outbreaks and informs decisions about necessary infrastructure and treatment. "AI tools like this are essential for data-driven health policy," Dr. Paudel emphasizes.

The Need for AI Guidelines in Healthcare

AI use in Nepal's healthcare sector is just beginning. Dr. Paudel believes that successful implementation of *MyClinico* could pave the way for broader adoption of AI technologies, benefiting both treatment and research.

Other hospitals may decide to adopt the tool based on its initial results. "AI will inevitably enter Nepal's healthcare system, but if this succeeds, it could accelerate adoption," he says.

However, clear guidelines are needed to govern how, where, and by whom such technologies are used. Without them, there is a risk of misuse of personal health data. "A patient's medical history is a valuable asset for healthcare professionals," Dr. Paudel notes.

Many countries have established protocols for using such tools. Dr. Paudel confirms that *MyClinico* is being used in Nepal in accordance with international standards. "It's time for the government to develop national guidelines for AI in healthcare," he says.

There is also concern that AI might replace jobs. But Dr. Paudel clarifies that *MyClinico* is designed to assist, not replace, physicians. "No healthcare tool has ever worked without human involvement," he says. "AI will only replace those who fail to adapt to its use."

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