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2025 CIO Summit: Future-Proofing Healthcare: AI, Sustainability and Resilience for Tomorrow

Against a backdrop of the rapidly changing AI and national healthcare landscape, the Scottsdale Institute convened the 2025 CIO In-person Summit hosted by Stanford Medicine and sponsored by Impact Advisors. IT leaders from leading health systems are focused now more than ever on their missions, adopting a resilient mindset to act on new opportunities and manage the burgeoning risks.

Here are key insights from the sessions:

- The status quo is no longer acceptable for IT. CIOs have led their organizations through digital transformation, and now they will lead through AI transformation.

- There is much discussion around ambient AI's ability to impact physician burnout, engagement and productivity. Right now, subjective benefits are outweighing objective benefits, and it is important not to downplay those intrinsic benefits.

- Preparation for future state IT must start now, versus a complete focus on today's challenges. We cannot afford to slow progress due to a lack of IT leaders' readiness.

- With IT, cheaper is not better. The goal shouldn't be to reduce IT expense by 5-10%; rather, it should be to find ways that IT can reduce the whole system's costs by 5-10%, and augment human labor with technology capabilities.

- IT's role in sustainability is one of partnership and leadership. Empowering team members to bring forward solutions and engaging openly with facilities, construction, clinical and financial partners creates a culture of sustainability where everyone considers this a part of their job. There are some easy, right now, wins every organization can implement.

- CIOs are at a tipping point as some vendors rapidly increase costs, raising questions about their systems' value against alternatives which may mean abandoning, converting or renegotiating contracts to ensure the appropriate ROI.

- For nearly all CIOs, ransomware remains the top concern, and there is a great deal of variation and creativity in how CIOs are working to manage the risk.

- Early success and interest in AI will create consumer demand to have AI tools as part of their healthcare experience. While many pilots show promise, questions remain about the risks and ability to more widely deploy AI tools.

- What is the right benchmark for evaluating technical tools against the human fallibility that exists today? Organizations must balance risk tolerance for implementing AI with a minimal bar set at ensuring that the tool performs at least better than we do today.

- Governance groups and their roles in assessing AI technology are evolving in real-time as they evaluate the level of information needed, composition of voting members and ability to answer questions as to the risk of the proposed solution.

- Continued robust discussion is needed to sort through the paradox of AI using so much computing power while also being one of the drivers of achieving sustainability.

- AI can see patterns in data that humans cannot, and we need to talk about this as an ecosystem. There are 5000+ data points collected on each patient, and a computer can identify the patterns across all health system patients.

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