





Implementing AI in Finnish Healthcare -national initiatives and local experiences

Jarmo Reponen, MD, PhD, radiologist;

Professor of Healthcare Information Systems; Research Unit of Health Sciences and Technology; University of Oulu; Finland











Background and experience



- 40 yrs. as a licenced physician, 25 yrs. teaching future radiologists as a chief radiologist
- 36 yrs. in medical informatics R & D & I
 - Research topics: Assessment of ICT systems, Usablity and User experience, Al and Decision support,
 - Leader: First teleradiology network in Finland 1991-1995
 - Leader: First University Hospital Electronic Patient Record in Finland, the "ESKO"-system 1996-2006
 - Leader: First in the world Mobile Medical App, MOMEDA 1998-2000
 - National and Nordic benchmarking of healthcare ICT systems since 2003-
 - Former Finnish representative international standardization (CEN TC 251, ISO-, DICOM-co-operation)
 - In expert teams defining the requirements for national Kanta-services (Health Information Exchange)
- 30 yrs. in the boards of national and international medical ICT associations
 - E.g. Finnish Society of Telemedicine and eHealth, Nordic Telemedicine Association, EuroPACS (now: European Society of Medical Imaging Informatics), International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth, European Congress of Radiology
- 19 yrs. teaching e-Health to students of biomedical engineering and medicine
- Project leader in the 4,3 M€ MEDigi project for digitizing medical and dental education
 2018-2021
- Vice-Leader of the 5 M€ DigiHealth research profile at University of Oulu











Content of the lecture:

1. National initiative: Finnish Al Ecosystem in Social and Health Services

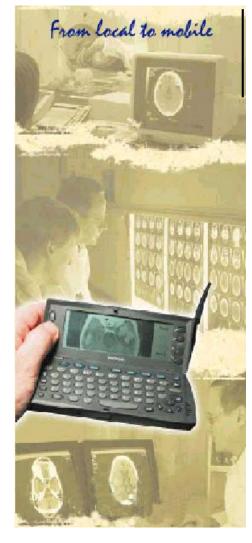
- 1. Purpose and Structure
- 2. Participants and Current Priorities
- 3. Proof of Concept Al Projects
- 4. Finnish Al Vision

2. Examples of AI solutions in one Wellbeing Services County: the Oulu experience

- Al Research: Collaboration between University of Oulu and Oulu University Hospital
- 2. Practical AI Implementations in **Pohde** Wellbeing Services County
- 3. Using AI and LLM to help clinicians in documentation
- 4. Radiology AI implementation
- 5. Resident / Citizen services



Instruction for Copilot: "The doctor uses a smartphone to record patient information with the help of large language models."



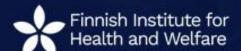
MOMEDA, the world's first healthcare mobile app, was developed in OULU in 1998-2000. Funded by EU 4th Framework R&D program

Better service, productivity, and job satisfaction through Al solutions

Network Coordinating Committee:



Ministry of Social Affairs and Health





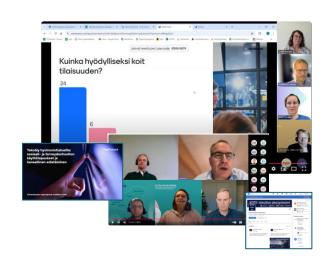


DigiFinland

Ecosystem slides on the courtesy of Jukka Lähesmaa and Laura Välkkilä from the SOTE AI Ecosystem

In brief

- An informal collaborative network of social and healthcare stakeholders, including authorities, businesses, and researchers
- Aims to enable and fund the effective and responsible utilization of artificial intelligence in social and healthcare services in Finland
- Established in the summer 2024 by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, operating until further notice
- The Coordination Group includes the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the HUS Group, the joint authority for Helsinki and Uusimaa, Una Ltd, and DigiFinland Ltd. DigiFinland acts as the ecosystem's practical operations coordinator



See Link:

https://digifinland.fi/en/aiecosystem-in-social-andhealth-services-sote/

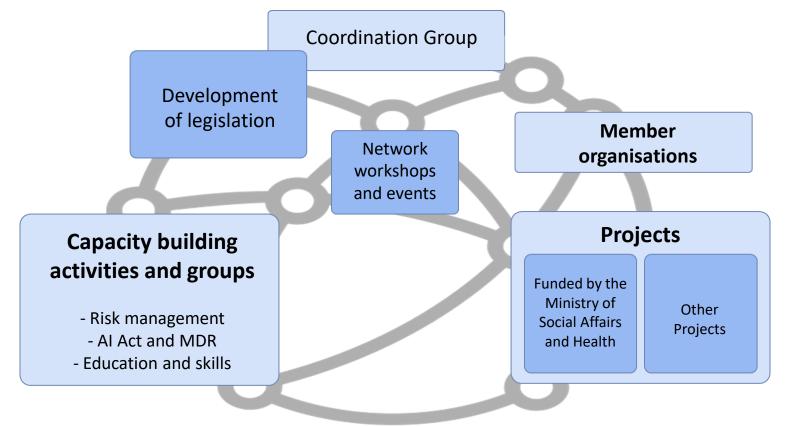








Ecosystem structure



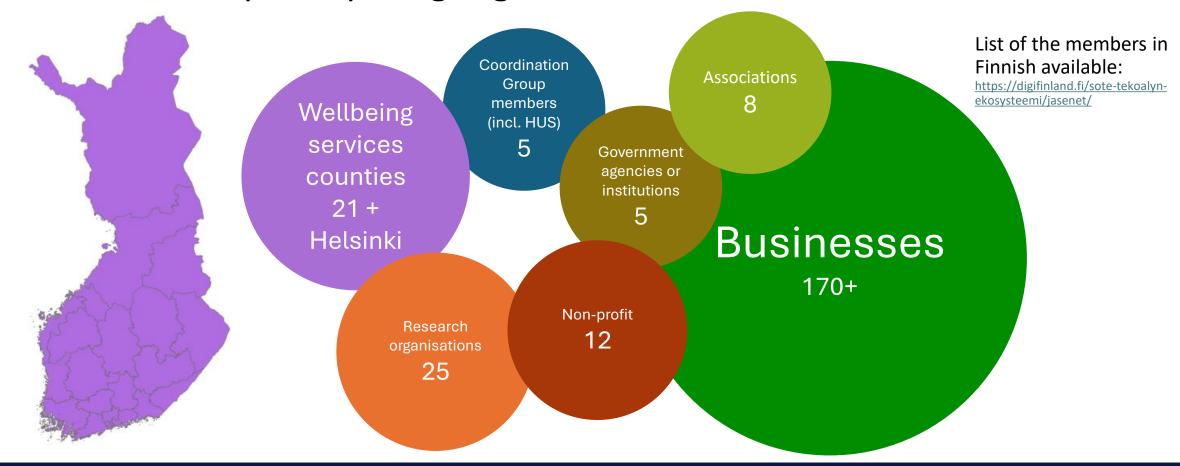








The number of participating organizations has reached 260. (Oct. 6th, 2025)













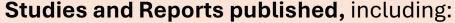
Year 2025 priorities



Pilot projects



Al Vision and Al impact analysis



- 1. Al Vision 2035 for Social and Healthcare Services (In English)
- 2. Al Readiness and Challenges in Wellbeing Services Counties (In English)
- 3. Legal Review of AI in Social and Healthcare
- 4. Mapping of Potential Al Use Cases
- 5. Guidelines for Evaluating Impact

National capabilities and involvement of all stakeholders



Growth and international collaboration











Funding of for AI projects in wellbeing services counties 2025-

- Oct 2024 an Open call
- 50 Applications submitted
- Expert evaluation
- Emphasis on effectiveness
- 10 projects selected
- Started Jan 2025
- Follow-up in the Ecosystem











Total of 10 funded pilot projects, Ministry contribution € 2.3 million.

- Al Assistant for Professionals
- 2. Al-Assisted Child Service Needs Assessment
- 3. Al-Based Prediction of Functional Capacity Changes
- 4. AI-Generated Summary of Client Background and Risk Information
- 5. LingAI: Real-Time Language Interpretation
- 6. Al based Real-Time Interpretation Solution
- 7. Implementation of AI-Assisted Medication Risk Assessment
- 8. AI-Assisted Documentation in the Wellbeing Services County
- 9. Al in Cancer PET Imaging
- 10. AI-Based Tools for Digital Obesity Treatment

- Support functions
- Interpretations (real time)
- Automatic professional / client discussion documentation
- Summarizing data to support professionals



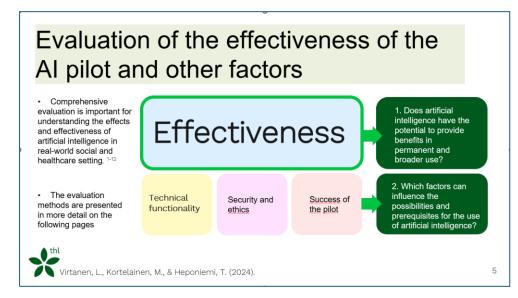






Impact and effectiveness assessment

- Guide for assessment made by Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)
- All pilots were / are requested:
 - to include preliminary estimations to the applications for the call
 - To make impact and effectiveness assessment during the piloting
- THL will make a summary on the results after the piloting period



Available in Finnish at: https://digifinland.fi/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/SOTE-tekoalykokeilujen-arviointiohjeet.pdf











Available at:

https://digifinland.fi/wpcontent/uploads/2025/09/SOTE-Al-Ecosystem-Al-Vision-2035.pdf

Summary: Al vision 2035

The joint AI vision 2035 of the SOTE AI ecosystem describes how artificial intelligence can be used to reform healthcare and social welfare.

- Around 300 members of the SOTE AI ecosystem participated in the vision work Polis discussion and two workshops in March–April 2025.
- Based on the ecosystem's proposals, a future of "strong healthcare and social welfare Al" was formed, where artificial intelligence will have a significant impact on service provision and will also make independent decisions.
- An Al coach will enhance people's wellbeing and health, as well as strengthen their own role in prevention. The coach will support the management of personal health data and help in finding the right service. Access to care will become faster.
- Artificial intelligence will coordinate prevention at both individual and population level. Automated screenings, individual services, and treatments will support broad national prevention efforts.

- With the help of artificial intelligence, health and social services will be accessible to everyone across Finland. Open and easy-to-use Al-based services will be available in public spaces and at home.
- The roles of healthcare and social welfare professionals will diversify. More time will be freed from routine tasks to work directly with clients. As a virtual colleague, artificial intelligence will produce analyses and suggestions to support the work. The work will also include demanding supervision of automation.
- Artificial intelligence will be able to independently carry out assessments of the need for services as well as selected diagnostic and care processes. In clinical work and knowledge-based management, the focus will shift from data collection and analysis to drawing conclusions and making decisions. The processes of knowledge-based management will become automated.



Al vision

Published in May 2025

Shared Vision of the Ecosystem



2 conversations



Ca. 300 participants



(V) Ca. 10.000 votes



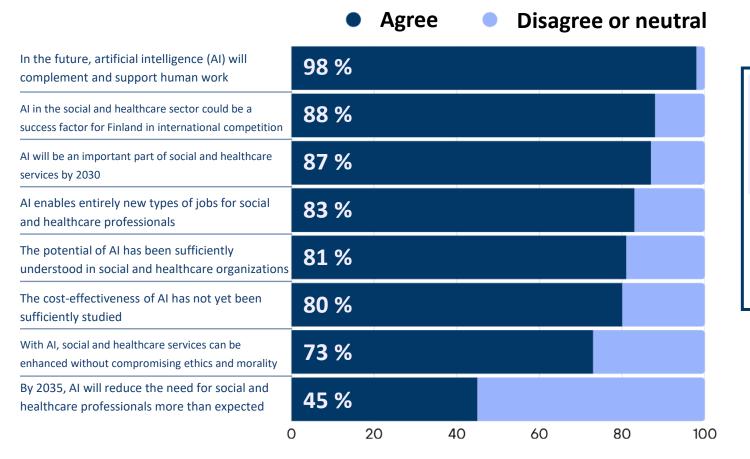
2 workshops

91%

of respondents have had positive experiences with the use of artificial intelligence

68%

of respondents use artificial intelligence daily



81%

of respondents believe that significant savings can be achieved in social welfare with the help of artificial intelligence if documentation is automated or a better situational picture is obtained

80%

of respondents believe that artificial intelligence can do **shift** planning better than humans

of respondents believe that nothing will change

Next steps:

- Roadmap based on the Al vision
- Social debate

- Data infrastucture of Health Al
- Health AI competences and skills

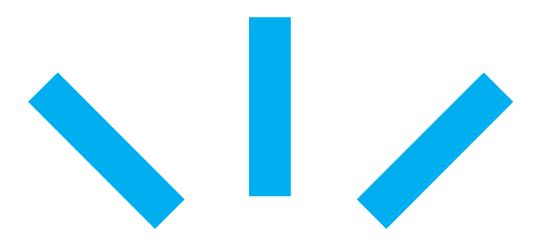


Instruction for Copilot:
"Show artificial intelligence
helping us with management
of health care data in acute
patient care."









Examples of Al Research and Services at University of Oulu (UOULU), Oulu University Hospital (OYS) and North Ostrobothnian Wellbeing Services County (Pohde)



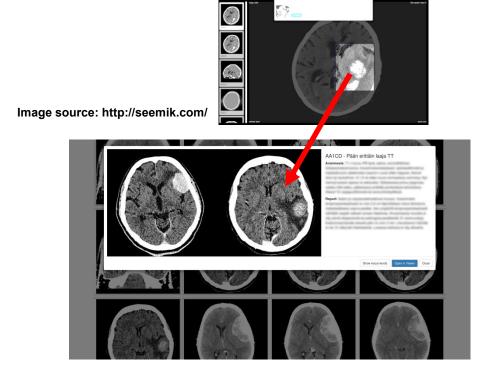








Al: from competitor to partner: **CARDS** – an Al-based decision support system developed in Oulu



1. Martynov P, Mitropolskii N, Kukkola K, Mutanen L, Reponen J, Mäkynen A (2016) CARDS: the decision support tool for radiologists examining head CT images. ECR 2016 / B-0233, DOI: 10.1594/ecr2016/B-0233.

- Computer software an assistant that does not make diagnoses, but helps the radiologist in interpretation by retrieving previous similar cases [1,2].
- It fetches reference cases from reports and the image archive.
- "Assisting Intelligence".

RESEARCH ARTICLE **Open Access** 2. BMC Medical Imaging (2017) 17:59 DOI 10.1186/s12880-017-0229-1 CrossMark Testing of the assisting software for radiologists analysing head CT images: lessons learned Petr Martynov^{1*}, Nikolai Mitropolskii¹, Katri Kukkola¹, Monika Gretsch², Vesa-Matti Koivisto³, Ilkka Lindgren², Jani Saunavaara⁴, Jarmo Reponen⁵ and Anssi Mäkvnen¹



Anssi Isosalo's doctoral dissertation 2024: fine-tuning an Al model on Oulu's mammography dataset; pretrained model is important, fine-tuning is necessary

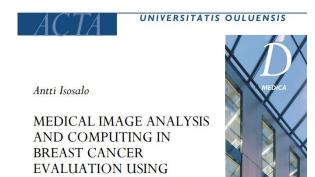


Deep Learning

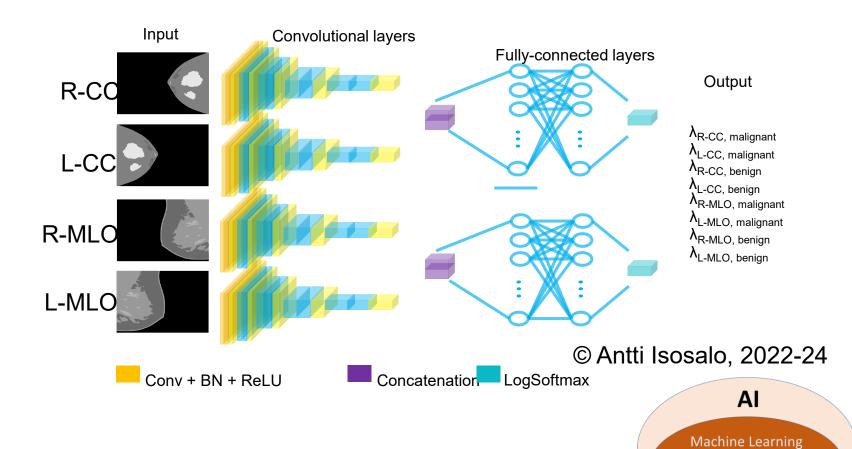
Schematic figure of the multi-view breast cancer classification model utilized in the experiments.

Transfer learning scheme was applied, and the pre-trained New York model was finetuned with **OYS screening** mammography dataset with 8,829 examinations (4321, 362 and 4146 normal, malignant, and benign findings). Malignant examinations were biopsy confirmed.

OULU 2024 D 1811



MAMMOGRAPHY DATA



Practical Al Implementations in the North Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County (Pohde)



For Supporting Healthcare Professionals:

- Al-assisted documentation (Pohde-Al)
- Instruction libraries
- Agents and bots
- Copilot
- Smart Symptom Checker

Medical Imaging and Diagnostics:

- Acceleration of MRI image reconstruction
- Knee X-ray osteoarthritis classifier
- Lung cancer screening tool
- Fracture detection tool
- Digital pathology diagnostic aid

For Local Residents /Citizens:

- PohdeBot -health services advisory tool
- Route Cludo recommendation tool
- Al translator for websites

Artificial Intelligence Supporting Documentation = Pohde-Al

 Development began in February 2024, involving doctors and nurses and social care professionals.
 In addition to Pohde, EskoSystems Ltd (development) and the University of Oulu (research) are participating.

- The Al application Pohde-Al **listens** to the conversation between the professional and the client, **transcribes** it, **summarizes** it with a LLM, and **displays the output**.
- The output can be **refined with prompts** multiple times if the user is not satisfied. It can also be manually supplemented if needed.
- The final output is copied and attached to the customer/patient **information system**.
- The tool is in pilot use in patient care starting from November 2024, and in social services client work starting from May 2025.



Suomen telelääketieteen ja eHealth seura ry. eHealth2024 kansainvälinen konferenssi XXIX Kansallinen telelääketieteen ja eHealth seminaari

Machine Learning

Deep Learning

Generative Al

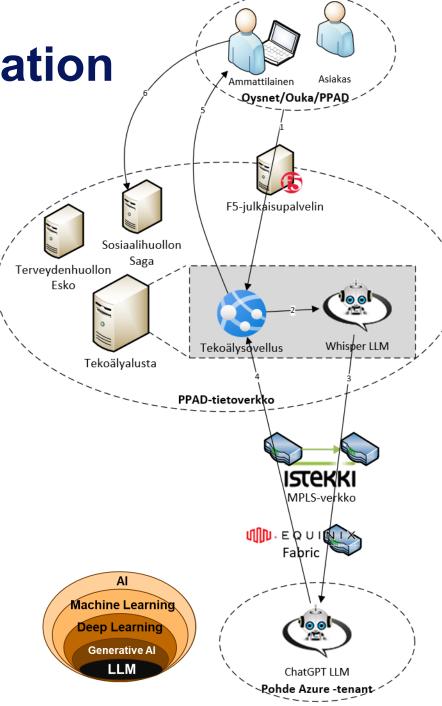
O-24: Co-development is crucial for implementing large language models for social and health care

Jaana Kokko¹, Roni Huhta², Mikko Reinikka¹, Timo Alalääkkölä¹, Miia Jansson³, Henna Härkönen³, Santeri Rytky¹, Miika T. Nieminen^{1,3}, Jarmo Reponen³, Heikki Mikkonen¹

¹Wellbeing services county of North Ostrobothnia (Pohde), Oulu, Finland; ²ESKO Systems Ltd, Oulu, Finland; ³Research Unit of Health Sciences and Technology, University of Oulu, Finland

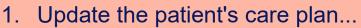
Pohde-Al: Technical Implementation

- Esko Systems Ltd. has developed an AI application that modularly uses various language models, both locally and in a secure cloud.
- It records conversations, transcribes them via one model, and summarizes with another model.
- The AI output is shown to professionals in a separate app, **not directly entered** into client or patient systems.
- Data is securely transferred from Pohde's network to a protected cloud service.
- For social services, the **abuse monitoring** feature was disabled due to the sensitive nature of cases.



Future of Pohde-Al:

- 1. Show the referral related to the visit.
- 2. Show the current status recorded from previous visits.
- 3. Show the plans recorded from the previous visit.
- 4. Show the three most recent imaging studies and their recorded statements.



- 2. Draft a referral for an MRI...
- 3. Draft the required information for a Physican statement B...

Before the Visit





During the Visit

Benefits and Impact

- Increased efficiency in the work of social and healthcare professionals
- Enhanced meaningfulness of work
- Professionals can focus on the patient, which improves the customer service experience

Prerequisites for Implementation

- Use cases are clearly defined
- The technology performs well enough that professionals are willing to adopt it

Disadvantages and Risks

 Complexity of regulation and interpretations by wellbeing services counties slow down development and limit benefits

Future Opportunities

- Professionals have already identified several good use cases, and new needs continue to emerge
- The technology has already demonstrated its capabilities in the Pohde Al-assisted documentation project



Al in Process Management

Instruction Library

- Pohde's Instruction Library provides a shared, up-to-date, and accessible platform for managing guidelines and instructions.
- The project defines criteria for updating and standardizing patient, client, and operational instructions to meet current care challenges and improve guidance.
- Al will be used to analyze situations and deliver accurate, timely instructions to staff—streamlining workflows and ensuring highquality service.
- Piloted in Pathology. Infection control pilot upcoming.





Kerro diabetes-hoitoketjuun liittyvistä vastuista Pohjois-Pohjanmaan alueella

Pohjois-Pohjanmaan alueella diabeteksen hoito on järjestetty siten, että jokaisessa sotekeskuksessa on diabeteshoitaja, joka vastaa perusseurannasta ja ohjaa tarvittaessa erikoissairaanhoitoon 1

Tyypin 1 diabetesta ja haastavia tyypin 2 diabetesta sairastavien holto on keskitetty Pohjanmaan diabetesyksikön Vaasan ja Pietarsaaren toimipisteisiin tai keskussairaalan endokrinologian poliklinikalle 1

Miten kerron lyhyesti insuliinipumpun käytöstä potilaalle?

Insuliinipumppu on pieni laite, joka antaa sinulle insuliinia jatkuvasti ihon alle. Sinun täytyy syöttää pumppuun tietoja aterioistasi ja verensokeristasi, jotta se voi annostella insuliinia oikein. Voit lukea lisää insuliinipumpusta ja sen käytöstä täältä.2

Lue lisää aiheesta terveyskyla fi makingdiabeteseasier.com

Kirjoita tähän









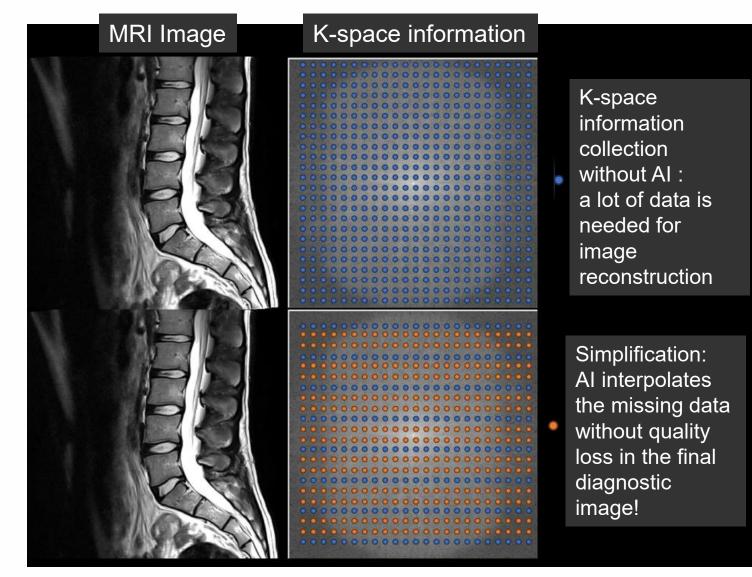
Al in Medical Imaging

Al-assisted acceleration of MRI imaging



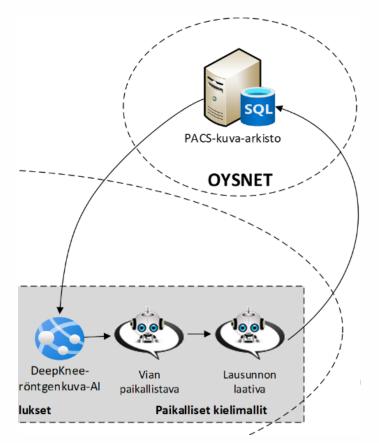
- By improving the quality of MRI images with AI assistance, imaging times can be reduced by up to half.
- Several appointment durations have already been shortened by one third (e.g., from 30 minutes to 20 minutes)
- The new Oulu University
 Hospital needed only 6 MRI scanners instead of previous

 7 MRI scanners due to this.



"DeepKnee" assists in KL-classification

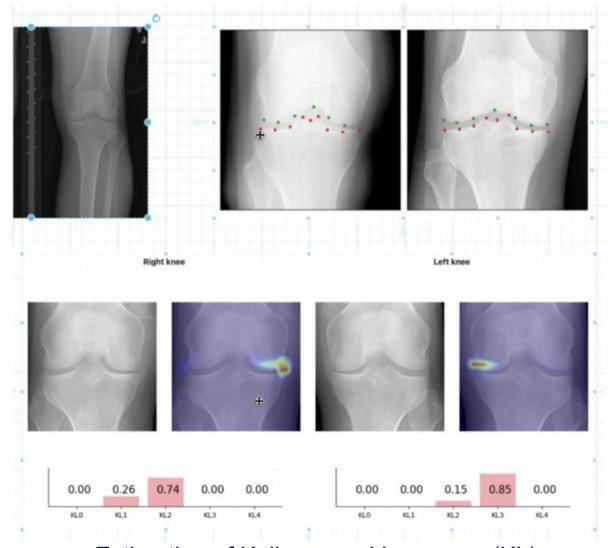
of knee osteoartrosis



OPEN

Automatic Knee Osteoarthritis
Diagnosis from Plain Radiographs:
A Deep Learning-Based Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market Thurway, 1818 Rathy, Plot Labrache & Approach
Akta Tidying, Market & Approac

Published in Tiulpin et al. Scientific Reports 8(1): 1727, 2018.



Pohde x

Pohjois-Pohjanmaan hyvinvointialue

Estimation of Kellgren and Lawrence (KL) classification with a confirmation "heat map".

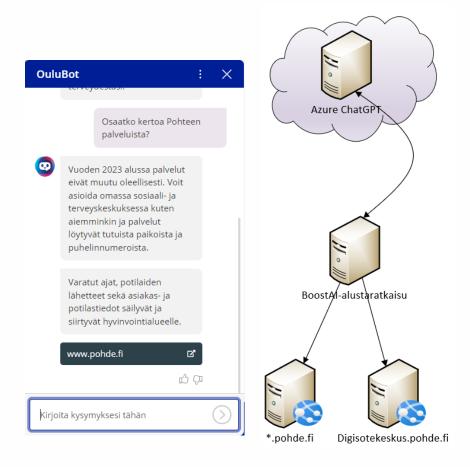


Al for Residents

"PohdeBot" for general guidance and the Digital Social and Health Center's chat service



- •The City of Oulu and Pohde use a shared **OuluBot** platform to implement conversational ChatBots.
- •The City of Oulu has extensive experience with the platform and its development. In **April 2024**, an Al based on a large language model (**ChatGPT 4 Turbo**) was introduced to complement the trained bot.
- •The Al currently in use is **ChatGPT 4o**, which has proven effective.
- •Pohde will begin using the "PohdeBot" on the same platform in autumn 2025 within the Digital Social and Health Center, including general advisory services.



Summary



- North Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services County (Pohde) and new Oulu University Hospital (OYS) actively seek for new AI solutions to improve their services.
- Development is done in close collaboration with commercial partners and University of Oulu.
- Pohde is an active member of the Finnish SOTE – Al Ecosystem.



© Sanna Krook, Pohde

Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions

Will be organized again in Oulu Finland, on June 16th to 17th, 2026!

The first Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions in 2024, was a pivotal event for professionals, researchers, and industry leaders to discuss, collaborate, and gain insights into the latest advancements in digital health and wireless solutions.

24 international experts as Invited Speakers, the Scientific Program with 17 sessions, oral speeches selected among 100 submissions. Exhibition and Site Visits arranged.

Springer Verlag published a two volume book in their CCIS series, with more than 900 pages.











Some highlights of the previous year 2024 conference:





READ MORE: https://www.6gflagship.com/news/pioneering-digital-health-at-the-nordic-conference-on-digital-health-and-wireless-solutions/



31 MAY 2024



Pioneering Digital Health at the Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions

▶ 0:00 / 19:02 **→**

The Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions brought together a community of passionate researchers and healthcare professionals in the scenic setting of the Hotel Lasaretti in Oulu, Finland.

Organised by the University of Oulu's *6GESS* and *DigiHealth* research programmes from May 7-8, 2024, the conference greated a vibrant space for exploring

The conference commenced with *Professor Jarmo Reponen*, the Conference President, welcoming attendees and highlighting Oulu's celebrated strides in healthcare innovation. He traced the evolution of Oulu's digital health technologies from their nascent stages in the 1990s to their current significant role. His account highlighted how digital infrastructure has become the foundation for Finland's innovative healthcare solutions, exemplified by the Finnish national health service reforms seamlessly integrating digital transformation to transform service delivery.



Photo: Eveliina Halttu. Kulmakuvaamo

Professor Jarmo Reponen, President of the Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions, welcomed a large audience of interested professionals, researchers, and industry leaders at the premier event in Oulu, Finland. The conference, organized by the 6GESS and Digithealth research programmes from the CO versity of Oulu, is a key platform for discussing the latest wavancements in digital health and wireless communications.



Photo: Eveliina Halttu Kulmakuvaamo

"Our vision for future medical healthcare technology involves significant integration of Al in computer systems," says Professor Tomohiro Kuroda the Director of Division of Medical Information Technology and Administrative Planning of Kyoto University Hospital.

Professor Tomohiro Kuroda from Kyoto University, Japan, set the stage with the first keynote address. He provided a comprehensive overview of Japan's digital health strategy and discussed the intricacies and multiple challenges of integrating a unified electronic health record system nationwide. Professor Kuroda's insightful presentation offered the audience a global perspective on the complexities involved in advancing digital health initiatives. His candid discussion of the hurdles faced in Japan shed light on the persistent obstacles nations around the world must overcome to realise the full potential of digitised healthcare systems. The audience gained invaluable insights into the intricate interplay between technological advances, regulatory frameworks and the seamless integration of digital solutions into existing healthcare infrastructures.

On-Site Visits: Future Hospital and Beyond



Photo: Henna Härköne

Conference attendees explored cutting-edge facilities, including Future Hospital OYS2030, OYS TestLab and Knoppi, MITTLAB, and Accessible Home (Mahdollistava Koti). The tours also featured the Nokia OTAVA Lab and Oulu University's Health Tech Research Labs: Multimodal Sensing Lab, UBICOMP Lab, and Human Body Twin Lab, showcasing the latest in health technology and innovation.

During the Nordic Conference on Digital Health and Wireless Solutions, attendees had the unique opportunity to visit the *Future Hospital OYS2030*, the "smartest hospital in the world". This cutting-edge facility showcased advanced medical technologies, including AI, robotic surgery, digital imaging, and telemedicine. Participants learned about the hospital's commitment to integrating new technologies and sustainability to provide high-quality care. The Future Hospital aims to be fully operational by 2030, setting a new standard in healthcare innovation.

Participants also explored the *OYS TestLab* and Knoppi, a specialised environment replicating hospital units for product testing, and the *MITTLAB* for medical imaging research. The Accessible Home demonstrated technology-supported living solutions for individuals with special needs. Nokia's OTAVA lab to hlighted advanced 5G testing capabilities, and the University Health Tech Research Lab presented



Paper submission deadline 15.12.2025 at nordic-digihealth.com



June 16-17, 2026

Kontinkangas Campus, University of Oulu, Finland The topics include (but are not limited to):

Digital Health Transformation, Innovations and Future Visions

Digital Healthcare Pathways

Al and LLMs in Healthcare: tools for professionals, aids for citizens

Data-Driven and Modelling-Based Decision Support

Health Technology Assessment & Impact Evaluation

Education in Digital Health

Wireless Technologies and Medical Devices

Connectivity Architectures and Cybersecurity in Digital Health

Novel Sensors & Bioinformatics

Remote Healthcare, eRehabilitation & Telemedicine

User Experience & Adoption of Health Information Systems

Health Data Sharing, Including Citizen-Generated Data

Omics-Driven Precision and Personalised Medicine

Digital Interventions for Prevention and Therapy of Chronic Conditions Ethics, Health Economics, Regulation & Implementation Research

All accepted papers will be published in an Open Access book by Springer







Tack! Kiitos! Thank you!

Contact: jarmo.reponen@oulu.fi

Professor of Healthcare Information Systems,

FinnTelemedicum,

Research Group of Health Sciences and Technology

University of Oulu

Finland

https://www.oulu.fi/en/researchers/jarmo-reponen



