

Agentic AI vs. Traditional AI: Not All AI is Created Equal

7 Key Differences Clinicians and Care Teams Need to Understand to Deliver the Best Care Now



Delivering excellent patient care has never been more complex. Clinicians and care teams face mounting pressure to improve outcomes, close gaps, and reduce burnout—all while delivering more personalized care. Primary care transformation is underway and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help and is already being used by most healthcare organizations. However, not all AI is created equal.

Enter Agentic AI

Unlike traditional AI—which predicts or recommends—Agentic AI acts. It initiates the best next action in care, closes gaps before they widen, and keeps clinicians and care teams informed without disrupting workflow. **With the Agentic AI market projected to grow from ~\$538M in 2024 to ~\$4.96B by 2030 understanding Agentic AI** and the different types of AI powering healthcare technology solutions is critical for anyone seeking to elevate their clinical practice, improve patient outcomes, and reclaim time for what matters most: patients.

Here's a quick breakdown of the primary AI types clinicians and care teams are likely to encounter or may already be using:

Traditional AI

Descriptive AI – *What happened?*

Tracks and reports historical trends (e.g., dashboards, utilization summaries).

Predictive AI – *What might happen?*

Forecasts risks or outcomes based on data patterns (e.g., risk scores, alerts).

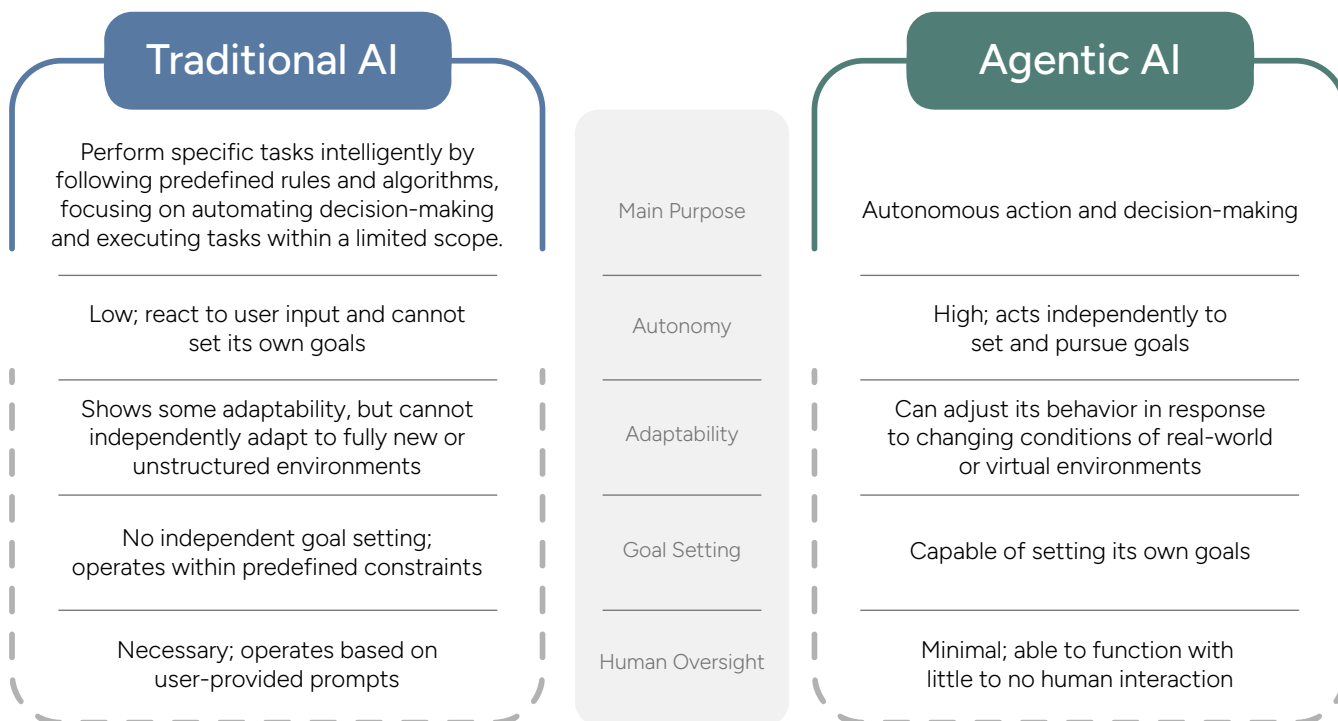
Agentic AI

What should be done—right now?

Acts autonomously to complete tasks, initiate care steps, and support real-time decisions.

Agentic AI is the only type of AI that moves beyond insights into real-time, meaningful action. It enables clinicians and care teams to do more with fewer resources and drive better outcomes.

Here are 7 key differences clinicians and care teams should understand about how Agentic AI can help them deliver the best care now:



1. Agentic AI Acts on Insight—To Free Up Time

While predictive AI offers recommendations, Agentic AI autonomously executes clinical or administrative steps—such as scheduling preventive screenings, closing gaps in care, or preparing visit summaries. It doesn't just predict like traditional AI—it takes the recommended best next action automatically, using data that is already in your EHR/EMR, claims systems, or care management platforms.

A traditional AI model flags a patient as high-risk for readmission. Agentic AI not only flags the risk but also initiates a care coordination workflow, alerts the care manager, and schedules a follow-up—without manual input.

Forrester estimates that the U.S. healthcare system spends over \$1 trillion per year on administrative burden; Agentic AI is seen as a key way to reduce clinicians' cognitive workload and free up time for more patient centered care.

<https://www.techtarget.com/searchenterpriseai/definition/agentic-AI>

https://www.forrester.com/blogs/agentic-ai-in-healthcare-a-new-era-of-intelligent-automation/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

2. Agentic AI Embeds Tasks Into Workflows—Not To-Do Lists

Traditional AI tools often add to the clinician's task list by generating alerts and dashboards that still require manual action. Agentic AI is embedded directly into the clinician and care teams workflow, delivering insights and initiating actions exactly when and where they're needed.

For example, in managing diabetic eye exams, an agentic AI system automatically identifies patients with care gaps, sends them personalized outreach with self-scheduling links, and escalates to the care team if no response is received. All updates are logged in the EHR/EMR—without clinician's intervention.

Gaps close faster, patients are more engaged, and clinicians and care teams time is preserved.

3. Agentic AI Is Proactive and Goal-Driven

Traditional AI systems are reactive—they wait for a user prompt or trigger, such as a clinician running a risk score or reviewing a flagged lab value, and then provide recommendations. The responsibility to act still falls to the clinician or care team, adding tasks to an already full plate.

Agentic AI shifts this paradigm by operating with specific clinical and operational goals in mind (e.g., closing preventive care gaps, improving chronic disease adherence, reducing readmissions). It continuously monitors patient and population data, autonomously launching outreach, scheduling appointments, and escalating cases to human teams only when necessary. In short, Agentic AI doesn't just inform—it acts.

An agentic AI system can identify overdue screenings and launch a campaign to schedule appointments. It follows up with patients, alerts team members as needed, and ensures resolution—without requiring a clinician or care team to initiate.

4. Agentic AI Closes Gaps Before Problems Arise

Agentic AI doesn't stop at identifying care gaps—it acts to close them. By automating outreach, scheduling, and documentation, it ensures patients receive timely care—without adding to clinicians and care team workload. This results in improved patient care, **stronger quality metrics, and fewer missed opportunities** to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care. **GE HealthCare** emphasizes that only 3% of healthcare data is effectively used by current systems. Agentic AI can bridge this gap by aggregating and automating care workflows across platforms to ensure timely interventions.

In a large network, agentic AI automatically identifies patients overdue for colorectal cancer screening, sends outreach using preferred channels, escalates non-responders, and tracks completion in the EMR.

5. Agentic AI Simplifies Clinician and Care Team Workflows

While traditional AI is often an add-on, Agentic AI is different. It is deeply integrated into clinical workflows, designed not only to surface insights but to act on them autonomously. This shift fundamentally reshapes how clinicians and care teams work—allowing them to spend more time on direct patient care and high-value decision-making rather than routine, manual tasks.

In chronic care management, Agentic AI monitors biometric data and automatically enrolls high-risk patients into tailored programs—adjusting outreach cadence and alerting clinicians when intervention is needed.

6. Agentic AI Is Personalized, Context-Aware, and Patient-Centric

Agentic AI integrates clinical history, claims, behavioral data, and social determinants to deliver personalized care at scale.

For annual wellness visits, Agentic AI identifies eligible patients, personalizes outreach based on communication preferences, prepares a pre-visit summary, and surfaces next best actions within the EMR.

Agentic AI enables visits that are more efficient, focused, and credible —without additional clinician and care teams effort.

7. Agentic AI Restores Purpose and Reduces Burnout

By eliminating routine administrative tasks, Agentic AI frees clinicians and care teams to focus on patient care and clinical decision-making.

One of the biggest challenges in healthcare today is clinician burnout. According to the **AMA and Medscape 2024 National Physician Burnout & Depression Report** 53% of physicians report experiencing burnout, with administrative burden (e.g., documentation, inbox management, and data entry) cited as the **top cause**. Burnout is linked to increased medical errors, lower patient satisfaction, and higher rates of clinician turnover, all of which directly impact patient care.

<https://hitconsultant.net/2024/01/26/physician-burnout-and-depression-rates-decline-medscape-report-reveals/>

Agentic AI streamlines routine administrative work, allowing clinicians and care teams to focus on delivering patient care and making complex clinical decisions. By reducing time spent on chart reviews, follow-up calls, and manual documentation, clinicians can devote more attention to direct patient interactions—leading to more meaningful visits, less administrative burden, and lower rates of burnout.

Conclusion: Understanding Agentic AI Differences and Benefits Drives Better Care and Decisions

Knowing the difference between Agentic and traditional AI helps clinicians and care teams drive healthcare efficiency with the use of technology.

Agentic AI isn't just smart—it's actionable, personalized, and focused on enabling better care. It empowers clinicians and care teams to deliver the right care at the right time, efficiently and effectively, while reclaiming time for what matters most: their patients.

When evaluating AI solutions for primary care, clinicians and care teams should ask:

- Does this system act—or only suggest?
- Does it integrate into my clinical workflow?
- Can it coordinate across care teams?
- Will it free up my time for patient care?

Agentic AI answers yes—on all counts.

AI is a requirement of primary care transformation, delivering the best care now and in the future.

APA citations:

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With a track record of managing over \$10 billion in medical spend across 12 markets, we remain dedicated to realizing the full potential of value-based care. Our Medicare Advantage prescription drug plan, Essence Healthcare, consistently earns 4.5 to 5.0 star ratings from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. These accolades underscore our unwavering commitment to excellence and our relentless pursuit of superior healthcare.

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