



INSTITUTE FOR
Ethics in AI

part of the 'Oxford Statement on
the responsible use of generative
AI in Social Care' collaboration.

Careworkers' guidance and statement of expectations on the responsible use of AI and particularly generative AI in adult social care

By the careworkers who attended the Careworkers' Roundtable held at Reuben College, University of Oxford, on the 16th of May 2024, co-hosted by the Careworkers' Charity (main organisers), the Institute for Ethics in AI at the University of Oxford and Katie Thorn at the Digital Care Hub

On the 17th of May 2024 frontline careworkers from England, Wales and Scotland met at Reuben College, University of Oxford, for a roundtable discussion on the 'responsible use of (generative) Artificial Intelligence (AI) in adult social care'.

This statement summarises our discussion. We hope it will be the first step towards putting the voices of frontline careworkers at the heart of how AI is managed in social care services, as it is us and people using the services who are most directly affected by the use of AI technology.

In this statement we are setting out our expectations towards our employers, developers of AI technology to be used in social care services, to policy makers, local authorities and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We are also addressing our peers with first hand insights and some guidance on what to think about when using generative AI, including ChatGPT or Microsoft Co-pilot, at work.

But first, we feel it necessary to state clearly what it is like to be a careworker right now.

What is it like to be a careworker now?

Our jobs are about caring for people, we enjoy doing this and for many of us it is our vocation and passion.

But we struggle with the amount of tasks we need to get through and the limited amount of time we have to do them in. This is especially true for supporting people with personal care. Often we go the full day without any breaks even though we are entitled to taking proper breaks. We need them to recover. A lot of the time that goes into our work is unpaid. For example, when we do training we often don't get paid for that time, especially when we are on zero-hours contracts. When we are sick, we often don't get sick pay and we think that we deserve better pay over all for the important work we are

doing. We want to do our jobs well but for that we need people to respect us, communicate well with us and value our experience. We are limited by 'levels of care', which often means that we cannot do tasks at hand. In our jobs, our professional opinions are often not listened to despite our experience of the people we support and our knowledge of social care. Many of us have been sexually and verbally abused at our workplace. We understand that for many family carers it can be a difficult and emotional time when we come and support them and their relatives or friends, but we deserve respect.

At the moment, we have very little work-life balance and often struggle to meet our own wellbeing and self-care needs. But, we still do love our jobs and want to do the best possible job for those we are supporting. We believe that if used correctly, AI could support us in our roles. AI will not be able to replace us, but we are confident that it will be able to assist our work.

AI – What are our expectations?

We do think that AI will be able to help address some of the issues we are facing and support us in our work. But we have clear expectations towards our employers, regulators and policy makers to ensure that we can continue to provide highest quality care and that the responsibility around the use of AI is a shared one, without landing on our shoulders alone. These are our expectations:

Expectations towards employers: We are calling on our employers to put in place AI and technology policies and procedures that set out clearly if, when and how AI can or even should be used by their staff. We are expecting our employers to take on full responsibility for any harm that may be caused using AI if procedures and policies were followed correctly.

We are expecting to receive proper training and access to continued learning so that we understand the AI technology we are expected to use, the risks of using it in the remit of our work and proper procedures to mitigate and respond to risks. There should be different levels of AI training and contact persons in the company that can support people with lower levels of training. But every member of staff should have basic awareness on AI if it is being used in the company. AI awareness should form part of the care certificate.

If we are required or expected to use AI and other technology in our work, we do want work devices rather than having to use our own mobile phones or computers. We also want to be compensated for any data or software costs that may be incurred using AI services.

Expectations towards developers: We are calling on all developers of care specific AI products to ensure that these products are aligned properly with values of care and that careworkers are involved meaningfully in the development of these products. We should be compensated fairly for such involvement. It is important that you are transparent about the product and its limitations. We don't want a 'sales pitch' but an

ethical, safe and effective product. We want information about big issues like data privacy, if and how data will be stored and how it will be used and we want to know how to use it safely.

Expectations towards local authorities and policy makers: We are expecting local authorities to make responsible decisions around the way that AI products are commissioned and used for the provision of adult social care. AI should not be seen as a response to all the problems the sector is facing. For example, careworkers cannot be replaced by AI but AI can support them. More money must be allocated to better train and pay careworkers and this should be balanced with the investment into AI products and development. Policy makers should do their part in developing an understanding on the responsible use of generative and other types of AI in adult social care.

Expectations towards the regulators of the nations: We are expecting the regulators of care services to have AI training and policies in place within their own organisations and to clearly communicate good practice around the use of AI in care services specific to the regulations of the UK nations. We are also expecting service inspectors to be trained on the responsible use of AI and to be supportive to us on our journey towards integrating AI into our work. Now more than ever do we need supportive regulators.

Some guidance for our peers before you start using generative AI at your work place

We want to encourage our peers in these times of new AI products, like ChatGPT and similar products. AI can possibly do a lot of good for us and help us in our work, like reducing the administrative workload, improve the quality of care we provide, support our clients and boost thinking.

BUT

Before starting to use any type of generative AI product at your work, it is important to do following:

- Don't just start using it – get clued up first! Generative AI has a lot of strengths but also many limits and risks, especially when used whilst caring for someone. You need to have a basic understanding of how the technology works and what to look out for and avoid before using it.
- Check with your employer whether they have an AI strategy/guidance/policies and procedures to follow and whether/when you are OK to use it at your work. You may risk liability issues if any problems arise!
- Always get the OK to use generative AI from your employer in writing, together with the terms and procedures on how to responsibly use it.
- Always make sure that you understand what is OK and what is not OK in terms of data privacy, confidentiality and copyright when using generative AI. AI products,

like ChatGPT, do not hold any private data securely and no personally identifiable or sensitive data should be put into it.

- AI chatbots, however reasonable the information may sound, are not people. The chatbot does not have an understanding of the world or emotions, it is only an algorithm. It is thereby only a tool to be used but it is you that has the real expertise and ability to give great quality care. You can use it along other sources of information, like the internet, peers, GPs etc.
- One of the main technical limitations of AI chatbots is that the information it provides may sound really reliable, but in fact it may all be made up or not in line with good practice. It is therefore important that you check and verify any information, suggestions etc. before you act on it.