

EP 7

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Emerging Health Trends & AI - Dr. William B. Weeks

Dr. William B. Weeks — Microsoft AI for Good Lab



Dr. William B. Weeks of Microsoft's AI for Good Lab on where AI earns its place in health: stretching scarce specialists, supporting self-care, cutting waste, and care that fits the patient.

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a rare specialist's treating time when AI does the screening [14:22](#)

70–80%

of health outcomes come from outside clinical care [28:58](#)

96%

of a patient's time is spent outside the healthcare system [56:27](#)

30%

of US healthcare spending is thought to be wasted [1:06:14](#)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 Flip the specialist's day

An algorithm screens phone video of a premature baby's retina, so the ophthalmologist spends 80% of the day treating instead of 20%. [13:47](#)

2 Work where two fields overlap

Disciplines rarely speak each other's language. Someone who knows medicine and economics, or medicine and IT, can translate between them. [17:58](#)

3 Most of health is not clinical

Clinical care explains 20–30% of health outcomes, yet about 95% of the US health dollar goes to it and 5% to public health. [28:58](#)

4 Do more with less

Fewer workers will pay for more older patients. AI can support self-care, head off avoidable hospital stays and back up clinicians. [56:08](#)

5 Treat the patient, not the number

His mother-in-law, 95, was given a blood pressure drug, grew dizzy and fell down the stairs. Care should follow what a patient values. [1:11:57](#)

“They put her on a medication to treat a number and not a patient.”

Dr. William B. Weeks · [1:11:57](#)

CHAPTERS



0:00	Intro	1 min	37:37	How a new drug reaches patients	6 min
0:47	Microsoft's AI for Good Lab	2 min	43:32	The \$2 million drug	2 min
2:23	The book AI for Good	5 min	45:52	Fee-for-service or value	5 min
7:26	Measuring impact	2 min	50:30	Global health trends	5 min
9:52	Choosing projects	7 min	55:08	AI in medicine in ten years	7 min
17:03	Which degree matters most	6 min	1:01:58	Will robots operate?	2 min
22:43	Leaders without a degree	4 min	1:04:07	The lab's current projects	6 min
27:05	Studying global public health	3 min	1:10:13	The healthcare he wants	4 min
30:24	How US healthcare is paid for	7 min			

TERMS EXPLAINED

Retinopathy of prematurity

Abnormal blood vessel growth in a premature baby's retina; a leading cause of childhood blindness.

Medicare and Medicaid

US public insurance: Medicare for people over 65 or disabled, Medicaid for those on low incomes.

Capitation

Paying a provider a fixed sum per patient per year, whatever care they use.

Social determinants of health

The conditions people live in, such as income, housing and air quality, that shape their health.

Fee-for-service

Paying a provider separately for every visit, test and procedure.

Value-based care

Payment tied to results: part is withheld until quality or outcome targets are met.

MENTIONED IN THIS EPISODE

AI for Good, the book

Microsoft AI for Good Lab

AI4HealthyCities

NYU Global Public Health

Listen, watch or download the transcript: aarsentyev.com/podcast/ep7-william-weeks

Each time opens the video at that moment. Hosted by Arseniy Arsentyev. A summary of a conversation, not medical advice.