Highlights from the 2025 Healthcare AI Bootcamp - Honolulu Event

August 12, 2025

Hybrid Session Hosted by the Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center (PBTRC)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center (PBTRC) was excited to join other federally funded Telehealth Resource Centers, the California Telehealth Resource Center, the University of Hawai'i, and regional partners in delivering the 2025 Healthcare AI Bootcamp series. This national initiative was designed to raise awareness, drive innovation, and strengthen health systems by introducing participants to the fundamentals of artificial intelligence (AI), its practical applications in healthcare, and the ethical, legal, and regulatory frameworks guiding its responsible use.

Over the course of four sessions, the 2025 Healthcare AI Bootcamp brought participants together from across the nation. Three sessions were held virtually, leading up to the final hybrid event that connected in-person participants in Honolulu and Los Angeles with a broader virtual audience. Participants gained practical skills and frameworks to begin or advance their AI in healthcare journey, positioning them to lead meaningful change within their organizations and communities.

The series culminated on August 12, 2025, with a hybrid finale hosted in Los Angeles, Honolulu, and online. The full-day event convened national experts and regional leaders to advance discussions on AI readiness, risk and responsibility, evolving regulations, and the role of healthcare professionals as AI ambassadors for responsible use. The Honolulu session took place at the University of Hawai'i's Shidler College of Business, Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (PACE), a hub for innovation and collaboration that provides students and community members with resources to turn ideas into action.

PACE's creative environment, complete with maker spaces, 3D printers, and mentorship opportunities, set the stage for lively discussion and hands-on exploration. Many attendees represented Hawai'i's leading healthcare organizations, all united by a shared passion for advancing accessible, high-quality care across the Pacific through responsible and culturally grounded uses of AI.

Meet the Partners

Empowering the Health Workforce Through AI Literacy

2. Online Sessions

The online sessions of the Healthcare AI Bootcamp provided participants with a strong foundation for understanding the opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities associated with AI in healthcare. Each virtual event was built upon the previous one, moving from awareness to application, regulation, and leadership, to prepare participants to integrate AI thoughtfully, effectively, and responsibly within their organizations.

The series opened with "Leveling Up AI Awareness and Anticipation," where Dr. Michael Abramoff, developer of the first FDA-authorized autonomous AI system for diabetic retinopathy, joined Jordan Berg from the National Telehealth Technology and Assessment Center to explore what AI readiness means for healthcare institutions. The discussion emphasized how AI can improve patient outcomes while addressing workforce challenges. Dr. Abramoff shared real-world lessons on safely bringing AI from research into clinical use, highlighting the importance of ethical frameworks, regulatory clarity, and seamless workflow integration.

Building on this foundation, the next session shifted the focus from awareness to implementation in the session titled "Risk and Responsibility in Healthcare AI". Dr. Saurabh Chandra from the University of Mississippi Medical Center presented data from virtual nursing programs that used AI to monitor patients remotely, achieving a 67% reduction in falls. Dr. Ethan Go of Stanford University's Arise Network discussed the evolving role of large language models, such as GPT-4, in supporting diagnostic accuracy and clinical documentation. Both speakers reinforced the need for human validation, data security, and training to ensure that AI supports , rather than replaces, clinical judgment.

The online sessions continued with Session 6 - What You Don't Know Can Hurt You: AI & Evolving Regulations," featuring experts Alya Sulaiman and Sylvia Trujillo, who unpacked the rapid growth of AI-related legislation, a 450% increase in state-level policies between 2024 and 2025, and outlined frameworks to balance innovation with accountability. They discussed the use of "nutritional labels" for AI tools, the importance of informed consent, and practical steps organizations can take to strengthen oversight and transparency. Sylvia's statement at the end of this session was a great reminder of why we are here. "The reason we're here is that there are shrinking resources. There is growing demand, high rates of burnout and the error rates in our medical system..." and "So if you feel super daunted, just remember these are powerful tools for good, but they also can be powerful tools for harm at scale. And so it's activities like this that can really mitigate risk and harm and drive tremendous opportunity."

The final online session, "Being a Healthcare AI Ambassador for Responsible Use," invited participants to translate learning into leadership. Led by Alifia Hasan and Dr. Mark Sendek from Duke University's Health AI Partnership, this session guided attendees through the AI product life cycle from identifying clinical needs to evaluating real-world performance. Participants explored how to champion responsible AI adoption within their own organizations, supported by frameworks designed to scale AI safely and accessibly across diverse healthcare settings.

Together, these sessions laid the groundwork for a shared understanding of responsible AI use, empowering Pacific healthcare professionals to apply emerging technologies in ways that are ethical, transparent, and grounded in community values.

3. Local Perspectives

The Honolulu session opened with a creative exercise where participants used ChatGPT to generate an image based on their favorite things, sparking conversations about how AI mirrors imagination, identity, and innovation. This activity led naturally into deeper reflections about the promise and risks of AI in healthcare, balancing optimism, responsibility, and cultural awareness.

Anticipation & Caution in a Changing Landscape

Participants expressed both excitement and caution about AI's growing role in daily life and medicine. Parents, educators, and clinicians shared hopes that AI could improve healthcare access and efficiency but also voiced concerns about misinformation, data privacy, and maintaining authentic human connection. Many agreed that while AI offers transformative potential, its adoption must be guided by ethical principles that protect individuals and communities.

Bridging Systems & Strengthening Data Use

A common theme among participants was the challenge of integrating fragmented healthcare systems and data sources. Leaders from the Department of Health, hospitals, and telehealth programs noted that AI can help synthesize data to improve decision-making and patient care. However, they also emphasized the need for data governance, transparency, and quality control to ensure AI systems enhance, rather than hinder — accessibility and health outcomes.

Human Connection & Cultural Responsibility

Several participants highlighted the importance of maintaining the human touch in medicine. Healthcare providers and telehealth professionals emphasized that AI should complement, not replace, a compassionate, person-centered care. Many echoed the call for "responsible AI" that reflects Hawai'i's (and the Pacific's) values and cultural contexts, ensuring that technology solutions remain rooted in empathy and community trust.

Workforce Readiness & Opportunity

Workforce development was another key topic. Representatives from health centers, universities, and nonprofits stressed the need for training programs that prepare Hawai'i's workforce for technological change. Participants shared that AI could reduce administrative burdens and create new job pathways in telehealth, data management, and AI policy, provided that education and support systems evolve alongside innovation.

Policy, Ethics, and "AI with Aloha"

Policy and civic leaders underscored the importance of developing local frameworks that embody "AI with Aloha" — ensuring that technological progress advances human well-being and community resilience. They highlighted the need for legislation that prioritizes data transparency, privacy, and fairness while encouraging locally driven policymaking that integrates indigenous values. The conversation emphasized that ethical AI in Hawai'i means ensuring accessibility, accountability, and inclusivity at every step.

4. Hands-On Learning

Between and after the online sessions, the participants in Hawai'i engaged in interactive exercises such as AI-generated image creation using ChatGPT, team-based problem solving, and live demos of AI tools 'local style'.

Using AI tools, the participants engaged in several activities that demonstrated the power and capability of AI. The Teams developed innovative healthcare solutions, including:

- **"Malama Compass"** – a multilingual, culturally grounded virtual health navigator designed to help patients in Hawai'i navigate complex care systems.
- An **AI-driven workforce initiative** addressing healthcare staffing shortages and caregiver support challenges by talking through and using AI prompts to develop solutions.

These activities demonstrated how accessible AI tools can spark innovation, collaboration, and creative problem-solving in healthcare.

5. Panel Discussion

The Hawai'i session concluded with a wonderful panel discussion on AI in healthcare across Hawai'i and the Pacific, featuring expert voices including Jason Lum (Strategic Program Manager, Hawaii Medical Service Association), Chrissy Kuahine (Director of Clinical & Patient Informatics, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center), Chung Chang (Strategic Broadband Coordinator, Hawai'i Broadband Office), Seiichi Nagai (Founder & CEO, CivicNexus) and James Pakele (Founding President, Dynamic Community Solutions). Together, they brought deep experience from health-insurer governance, community health equity, state broadband policy, civic-tech innovation and nonprofit community solutions, setting the stage for a rich dialogue.

The panel explored how artificial intelligence is transforming healthcare delivery, governance and community outcomes in Hawai'i and the Pacific. Jason Lum described his organization's AI Center of Excellence and stressed that ethical governance, data privacy and transparency are key enablers for AI to realize its promise while maintaining member trust. Chrissy Kuahine contributed a vital community-health perspective, drawing attention to the digital divide and how inclusive, culturally informed AI deployment in underserved communities must accompany technological advances. Chung Chang underscored that robust digital infrastructure and broadband equity are foundational enablers for telehealth and AI-enabled care; Seiichi Nagai brought forward the potential of open-source models and civic-tech platforms to democratize AI; while James Pakele reminded the group that community-driven solutions anchored in local values are critical, especially when smaller organizations face resource constraints and scaling hurdles.

6. Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, the panel agreed on several key imperatives: AI must be implemented with strong governance, accountability, and community engagement—rooted in Hawai'i's aloha spirit—so that benefits reach across large systems and smaller clinics alike. They endorsed exploring open-source AI tools for affordability and local control, ensuring compliance with HIPAA and patient-data standards, and establishing collaborations to share best practices, datasets and frameworks. Crucially, they affirmed that human empathy and clinical judgment remain irreplaceable even as AI amplifies capabilities. With the sense of innovation and shared purpose ignited at the session, participants left feeling motivated, inspired and hopeful about the future of technology-enabled health for Hawai'i and the Pacific.

Get Involved

To continue the conversation and access AI resources, visit healthaibootcamp.org or reach out to PBTRC to explore partnership, training, and resource opportunities.

Together, we can ensure that AI in healthcare remains rooted in ethics, access, and aloha!