

AI News Digest

06/08/2026 - 06/14/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: CLINICAL & HEALTH PRACTICE

AI's Role in Enhancing Communication and Workforce Protections

Recent developments highlight the growing intersection of AI in healthcare and education. Dr. Katie J. Wells emphasized the importance of workforce protections in her testimony before Congress, advocating for responsible AI integration in healthcare settings. Meanwhile, Kimberly Zajac introduced a model for incorporating Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in educational environments, promoting inclusivity through Universal Design for Learning principles. Together, these initiatives underscore the potential of AI to improve communication and support diverse needs across sectors.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Dr. Katie J. Wells advocates for AI workforce protections in healthcare.
- ✓ A new AAC model aims to enhance inclusivity in education.
- ✓ Universal Design for Learning principles are central to the AAC model.

IMPLICATIONS

- Strengthened workforce protections may lead to safer AI practices in healthcare.
- Increased adoption of AAC could improve educational outcomes for diverse learners.
- AI integration in communication tools may reshape teaching methodologies.

1. AI Now Senior Fellow Dr. Katie J. Wells Testifies before the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Nursing, Political Science & Public Administration, Public Health Sciences

Topics: Healthcare AI, Gig Economy Impact, Worker Protection Legislation, Patient Safety in AI, AI Policy & Regulation

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 3

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

Dr. Katie J. Wells, an AI Now Senior Fellow specializing in AI and healthcare, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education & the Workforce Subcommittee on Workforce Protections on June 9, 2026. In her testimony, she addressed the impact of gig nursing platforms on worker protections and patient safety, indicating that these platforms are influencing policymakers to support legislation that may undermine existing protections.

<https://ainowinstitute.org/news/announcement/wells-house-subcommittee-testimony>

2. Integrating Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) As An Inclusive Practice

Category: Education

Departments: Educational Leadership, Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences

Topics: Healthcare AI, Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Universal Design for Learning, Inclusive Education Practices

Impact Score: 23.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 3

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 3

Kimberly Zajac, a speech language pathologist, has developed a model for integrating Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) within educational settings, emphasizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. This model aims to equip all educators with the necessary skills to support students with complex communication needs, thereby dismantling systemic barriers and fostering an inclusive learning environment. Zajac's initiative has received recognition, including the Tech & Learning Innovative Leader Award, and has resulted in significant funding for resources and professional development to enhance accessibility in education. Her collaborative approach involves stakeholders at all levels to ensure that communication needs are met for historically marginalized students.

<https://www.techlearning.com/learning/leadership/integrating-augmentative-and-alternative-communication-aac-as-an-inclusive-practice>