FAQ: HCA's AI Ethics Framework

What is the HCA AI Ethics Framework?

The HCA AI Ethics Framework is a set of guidelines and principles developed by the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) to govern the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in health care. It aims to ensure the ethical and responsible utilization of AI tools involving HCA clients' data.

What is the purpose of the HCA AI Ethics Framework?

The primary purpose of the HCA AI Ethics Framework is to assist the HCA AI Ethics Committee in evaluating proposed AI use cases and provide recommendations to HCA's partners, stakeholders, and contractors. It aims to balance the benefits, costs, and risks associated with using AI tools while prioritizing the protection of individuals' rights and well-being.

How does the HCA AI Ethics Committee operate?

The HCA AI Ethics Committee, sponsored by the HCA Data Governance and Oversight Committee, is responsible for developing and maintaining the AI ethics framework. It evaluates requests for AI use involving HCA clients' data and provides recommendations. The committee is guided by established goals and principles to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability in its decision-making process.

What are the guiding principles of the HCA AI Ethics Committee?

The HCA AI Ethics Committee is guided by principles such as public purpose and societal benefit, safety, validity, fairness, privacy, accountability, transparency, explainability, and interpretability. These principles ensure that AI applications align with HCA's mission of delivering equitable services and outcomes while upholding ethical standards and protecting client privacy.

How does the HCA AI Ethics Framework address fairness and bias in AI systems?

The framework emphasizes the importance of fairness and mitigating bias in AI systems to ensure equitable distribution of benefits and prevent discrimination. It acknowledges different types of bias, including systemic, human, and statistical biases, and promotes equitable outcomes for all individuals, including those historically marginalized.

What is the process for requesting AI use involving HCA clients' data?

The process begins with a request submitted by HCA staff, partners, researchers, or external parties, who should complete the AI Ethics Screening Questionaire, found in the framework document. The request is then routed to the appropriate HCA Data Team staff who support the AI Ethics Committee. The request undergoes initial discussion and review by the committee, and recommendations from the committee are then routed to the relevant staff for further action.

How can the AI Ethics Framework assist requestors in preparing their requests?

The framework provides requestors with guidance and information necessary for preparing their requests for AI use involving HCA clients' data. It outlines the screening and assessment questionnaires, which help requestors assess the ethical implications and potential impact of their proposed AI tools on Washington residents. By completing these questionnaires, requestors can ensure that their requests are thorough and aligned with ethical standards.

How does the HCA AI Ethics Framework promote trustworthiness in AI systems?

The framework emphasizes the importance of AI systems making correct predictions, recommendations, or decisions based on data and models, as well as their ability to function reliably in various situations. By prioritizing trustworthiness, the framework aims to instill confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of AI technologies used in health care.

Where can I find the HCA AI Ethics Framework?

Read the AI Ethics Framework at our website.

People can participate in the AI request process by submitting requests for AI use involving HCA clients' data and adhering to the screening and assessment procedures outlined in the framework.

To learn more, contact hcadata@hca.wa.gov.