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Australia pioneers AI method to improve dementia diagnosis

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To transform how dementia is identified



Researchers from the National Centre for Healthy Ageing (NCHA), a partnership between Monash University and Peninsula Health in Australia, have developed a novel method for improving dementia detection in hospitals by combining traditional methods with artificial intelligence (AI).

Approximataely 50 million people worldwide live with dementia, a number expected to triple by 2050, according to the World Alzheimer Report. In Australia, there is still a need to substantially improve our methods for counting people with dementia. Accurate Identification is critical to understanding the true size of the problem nationally, and to be able to effectively plan services. However, routine health data that are currently used for this purpose probably underestimate the numbers of people with dementia.

In a study involving over 1,000 individuals aged 60 and above in the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula, algorithms using traditional data approaches with AI in electronic health records demonstrated high accuracy in identifying whether or not a person may have dementia. Supported by national health bodies, the initiative could transform how dementia is identified, counted for national estimates, and managed in healthcare settings.

Given the global rise in dementia cases and the difficulty in accurately identifying patients through conventional medical coding, this approach can transform the Australian landscape in this field.