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Review Article

Bedside data to clinical foresight: the emerging role of nurses in AI-enabled predictive care and early patient deterioration detection

R. Sheeba[1], N. Murugananandan[2], Tamilselvan[3], Tanusri Mandal[4], Israel Jeba Prabu D.[5], Jamunarani P.[6], Ilakkiya N.[7], Padmapriya N.[8], Nithin Manly S.[9], Golda Sahaya Rani R.[10], J. Sathya Shenbega Priya[11], Mohammed Umar[12]*

[1]Department of Obstetric and Gynaecological Nursing, KG College of Nursing, The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India
[2]Department of Medical Surgical Nursing, College of Nursing, Madurai Medical College, The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India
[3]Department of Medical Surgical Nursing, Shri Babu Singh Daddu Ji Nursing and Paramedical College, Major S. D. Singh University, Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, India
[4]Community Health Nursing, Government College of Nursing, Serampore Walsh SD/SS Hospital, The West Bengal University of Health Sciences, Serampore, Kolkata, West Bengal, India
[5]Department of Medical Surgical Nursing, BEE ENN College of Nursing, University of Jammu, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India
[6]Department of Psychiatric Nursing, KMCH College of Nursing, The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India
[7]Department of Psychiatric Nursing, Karpagam Nursing College, The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India
[8]Department of Child Health Nursing, Karpagam Nursing College, The Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. R. Medical University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India
[9]Department of Mental Health Nursing, School of Nursing, Takshashila University, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu, India
[10]Department of Medical Surgical Nursing, School of Nursing, Takshashila University, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu, India
[11]Department of Medical Surgical Nursing, College of Nursing, Kannur Medical College, Kerala University of Health Sciences, Kannur, Kerala, India
[12]Department of Nursing, Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences (UPUMS), Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences, Saifai, Etawah, Uttar Pradesh, India

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***Correspondence:**
Mohammed Umar,
E-mail: umarrathore0786@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Early recognition of patient deterioration remains a cornerstone of high-quality nursing care and is essential for preventing avoidable morbidity, mortality, and unplanned intensive care admissions. Despite advances in physiological monitoring, delays in recognizing subtle clinical changes continue to contribute to adverse patient outcomes. Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative technology capable of integrating large volumes of clinical, physiological, laboratory, and electronic health record (EHR) data to generate predictive insights that support timely clinical decision-making. AI-enabled predictive care systems, including machine learning algorithms, deep learning models, wearable sensor analytics, and early warning systems, provide nurses with opportunities to identify high-risk patients before overt clinical deterioration occurs. Rather than replacing nurses, these technologies augment clinical judgment by facilitating continuous risk assessment, prioritization of care, and proactive intervention. This narrative review explores the evolving role of nurses in AI-enabled predictive care and early patient deterioration detection. It examines the integration of bedside clinical observations with AI-driven predictive analytics, highlights current applications across acute and critical care settings, and discusses implications for nursing education, leadership, ethical practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The review also addresses challenges related to algorithmic bias, explainability, data quality, digital literacy, and governance while identifying future opportunities for human-centered AI implementation. Strengthening nurses' competencies in digital health and AI is essential for maximizing patient safety and ensuring equitable, evidence-based care in increasingly technology-enabled healthcare environments.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Predictive analytics, Nursing, Early warning systems, Clinical deterioration, Machine learning, Patient safety, Digital health

INTRODUCTION

The integration of AI into bedside nursing practice has accelerated following the widespread adoption of electronic health records, continuous physiological monitoring systems, Internet of Medical Things (IoMT) devices, and wearable biosensors. These technologies continuously generate high-frequency patient data that can be analysed in real time to estimate an individual's risk of deterioration. AI-powered predictive models are increasingly being incorporated into hospital dashboards, smart alarm systems, and clinical decision support platforms, enabling nurses to identify deteriorating patients hours before conventional assessment methods would typically detect significant clinical decline. Such early prediction facilitates prompt nursing interventions, activation of rapid response teams, optimization of treatment plans, and more effective allocation of healthcare resources.[1-4]

Recent studies have demonstrated that AI-assisted early warning systems can improve the prediction of sepsis, acute kidney injury, respiratory compromise, and unexpected cardiac arrest with greater sensitivity and specificity than traditional rule-based scoring systems.[5-9] However, the effectiveness of these technologies depends not only on algorithmic performance but also on nurses' ability to interpret AI-generated recommendations within the broader clinical context. Clinical judgment remains indispensable because predictive models may occasionally produce false-positive or false-negative alerts, and patient-specific factors, psychosocial circumstances, and nuanced bedside observations often require individualized assessment beyond algorithmic outputs.[10] Therefore, successful implementation of AI in nursing practice requires a collaborative human-AI partnership in which predictive analytics complements rather than replaces professional expertise.

The expanding role of nurses in AI-enabled predictive care also necessitates new competencies in digital health, health informatics, data literacy, and ethical decision-making. Nursing professionals must understand the principles underlying AI algorithms, recognize their limitations, and critically evaluate predictive outputs to avoid automation bias and ensure safe, patient-centered care.[11] Furthermore, issues related to algorithmic transparency, data privacy, cybersecurity, accountability, and equity must be addressed to ensure that AI systems are implemented responsibly and do not inadvertently reinforce existing healthcare disparities. Professional organizations increasingly advocate for integrating AI education into undergraduate, postgraduate, and continuing nursing education to prepare the workforce for technology-enabled models of care.[12]

As healthcare transitions from reactive disease management to proactive, predictive, and personalized care, nurses are uniquely positioned to bridge bedside clinical expertise with advanced data-driven intelligence. Their continuous presence at the point of care, combined with AI-supported predictive insights, has the potential to transform early deterioration detection, strengthen patient safety, reduce preventable adverse events and improve clinical outcomes across acute, critical and community healthcare settings. Consequently, understanding the evolving role of nurses within AI-enabled predictive care is essential for informing clinical practice, education, research, and healthcare policy. This narrative review therefore synthesizes current evidence on AI-assisted predictive technologies, examines the emerging responsibilities of nurses in early patient deterioration detection, explores implementation challenges, and identifies future directions for integrating artificial intelligence into safe, ethical, and evidence-based nursing practice.[13,14]

METHODS

Study design

This review was conducted as a narrative literature review to comprehensively synthesize the current evidence regarding the evolving role of nurses in artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled predictive care and early patient deterioration detection. A narrative review methodology was selected because it enables the integration of evidence from diverse research designs, including randomized controlled trials, observational studies, qualitative research, implementation studies, systematic reviews, clinical practice guidelines, consensus statements and health informatics reports. Unlike systematic reviews that primarily focus on narrowly defined clinical questions, a narrative review facilitates a broader exploration of emerging concepts, technological innovations, implementation strategies, ethical considerations, and implications for nursing practice.[15]

Review framework

The review was guided by the Scale for the Assessment of Narrative Review Articles (SANRA) and informed by internationally accepted recommendations for transparent reporting of literature reviews. Although narrative reviews do not require adherence to PRISMA guidelines, the principles of systematic literature identification, critical appraisal, and transparent evidence synthesis were incorporated to enhance methodological rigor and reproducibility.[16] The review aimed to summarize contemporary evidence concerning AI-based predictive analytics, clinical decision support systems, machine learning algorithms, wearable monitoring technologies, electronic health records, and nursing contributions to early recognition of patient deterioration across diverse healthcare settings.

Literature search strategy

A comprehensive literature search was undertaken across multiple electronic databases to identify relevant studies published between January 2015 and June 2026. The selected databases included PubMed/MEDLINE, Scopus, Web of Science, CINAHL, Embase, IEEE Xplore, and the Cochrane Library because they collectively provide extensive coverage of nursing, medicine, biomedical informatics, artificial intelligence, and digital health research. Additional literature was identified through manual searches of reference lists, citation tracking, professional organization reports, and publications from the World Health Organization, International Council of Nurses, and leading healthcare informatics organizations to minimize publication bias and ensure comprehensive evidence retrieval.[17]

The search strategy combined Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and free-text keywords using Boolean operators. The principal search terms included "Artificial Intelligence," "Machine Learning," "Deep Learning," "Predictive Analytics," "Clinical Decision Support Systems," "Early Warning Systems," "Patient Deterioration," "Clinical Deterioration," "Nursing," "Registered Nurses," "Electronic Health Records," "Remote Monitoring," "Wearable Sensors," "Digital Health," and "Patient Safety." Boolean operators (AND, OR) and truncation symbols were used to optimize search sensitivity and specificity across individual databases.[18]

Eligibility criteria

Studies were considered eligible if they examined AI applications related to predictive care, early deterioration detection, clinical decision support, or predictive analytics in healthcare and explicitly discussed nursing practice or multidisciplinary clinical care involving nurses. Original quantitative studies, qualitative investigations, mixed-methods research, implementation studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, evidence syntheses, clinical guidelines, expert consensus statements, and government reports published in English were included. Studies conducted in hospital settings, intensive care units, emergency departments, perioperative environments, community healthcare, and virtual care settings were considered to provide a comprehensive understanding of AI integration across the continuum of care.[19]

Studies were excluded if they focused exclusively on diagnostic image interpretation without nursing involvement, laboratory algorithm development lacking clinical application, veterinary medicine, editorials without substantive evidence, conference abstracts without full manuscripts, duplicate publications, or studies published in languages other than English. Articles with insufficient methodological information or those unrelated to predictive patient deterioration were also excluded to maintain the scientific quality of the review.[20]

Study selection process

Following database searching, all identified records were imported into reference management software, where duplicate citations were removed. Titles and abstracts were independently screened for relevance according to the predefined eligibility criteria. Full-text articles were subsequently assessed to determine their suitability for inclusion in the final synthesis. Disagreements regarding study eligibility were resolved through repeated review of the publication and discussion based on methodological quality and relevance to the review objectives. Citation tracking and manual searching were subsequently performed to identify additional influential publications not captured during the primary database search, thereby strengthening the comprehensiveness of the evidence base.[21,22]

Data extraction

Following the final selection of eligible studies, data were extracted using a standardized data extraction framework developed specifically for this review. The framework ensured consistency in capturing relevant information across diverse study designs while minimizing reporting bias. Information extracted from each publication included the first author, year of publication, country of origin, study design, healthcare setting, participant characteristics, sample size, AI technology employed, predictive model or algorithm used, clinical outcome measured, nursing involvement, principal findings, implementation barriers, facilitators, and recommendations for future practice.[23] Data extraction also included information regarding algorithm performance, including sensitivity, specificity, area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUROC), positive predictive value, negative predictive value, and calibration where these outcomes were reported. Particular emphasis was placed on identifying evidence describing nurses' contributions to AI-supported clinical decision-making, early recognition of patient deterioration, workflow integration, interdisciplinary communication, and patient safety improvement.

Quality appraisal of the evidence

Although narrative reviews do not universally require formal methodological quality assessment, critical appraisal was undertaken to improve the credibility and trustworthiness of the synthesized evidence. The methodological quality of systematic reviews was considered using the AMSTAR-2 framework, while observational studies were interpreted in accordance with the Newcastle–Ottawa Scale. Randomized controlled trials were evaluated using the Cochrane Risk of Bias framework, and qualitative investigations were interpreted using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist.[24] The review also considered reporting quality, methodological transparency, sample representativeness, external validity, statistical robustness, and potential sources of bias when interpreting individual studies. Publications originating from internationally recognized journals and organizations were prioritized because of their rigorous peer-review standards and greater methodological reliability.

Data synthesis

A thematic narrative synthesis approach was adopted because of the substantial heterogeneity among included studies with respect to research design, AI technologies, patient populations, healthcare environments, and reported outcomes. Meta-analysis was not considered appropriate due to differences in study methodologies, predictive algorithms, outcome measures, implementation strategies, and reporting standards.[25] Instead, findings were systematically organized into major thematic domains that reflected the objectives of the review.

The principal themes included AI-enabled early warning systems, machine learning models for predicting clinical deterioration, integration of electronic health record data, wearable monitoring technologies, nursing surveillance and clinical judgment, implementation of clinical decision support systems, interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical and legal considerations, digital competency among nurses, barriers to AI implementation, and future opportunities for predictive nursing practice. Comparative interpretation across studies enabled identification of recurring trends, areas of agreement, evidence gaps, and emerging innovations influencing contemporary nursing care.[26]

RESULTS

Overview of the included evidence

The literature reviewed consistently demonstrated that artificial intelligence (AI) has become an increasingly valuable component of predictive healthcare by facilitating the early identification of patients at risk of clinical deterioration. Across acute care hospitals, intensive care units (ICUs), emergency departments, perioperative units, and step-down wards, AI-based predictive models showed greater accuracy than conventional rule-based early warning systems in detecting subtle physiological changes before the onset of overt clinical instability.[31] Studies reported that machine learning algorithms integrating multiple patient variables including vital signs, laboratory investigations, medication records, nursing assessments, demographic characteristics, and historical electronic health record (EHR) data were capable of predicting adverse clinical events several hours before traditional bedside assessment methods. This predictive capability enabled healthcare professionals, particularly nurses, to initiate timely assessments, escalate care appropriately, and implement preventive interventions before irreversible deterioration occurred.[32]

The reviewed evidence also indicated that AI technologies were increasingly embedded within hospital clinical decision support systems, allowing continuous surveillance of hospitalized patients without increasing nurses' documentation burden. Automated risk prediction dashboards generated real-time alerts that supported clinical prioritization, enabling nurses to focus their attention on patients with the highest probability of deterioration. Rather than replacing clinical expertise, AI served as an adjunct to nursing judgment by providing additional objective evidence to support bedside decision-making and improve patient safety show in table 1 and 2.[33]

AI applications in early patient deterioration detection

Machine learning algorithms demonstrated substantial effectiveness in predicting a wide range of adverse clinical outcomes. The most frequently reported applications included early detection of sepsis, respiratory failure, acute kidney injury, cardiac arrest, unplanned ICU transfer, postoperative complications, and in-hospital mortality. Several studies demonstrated that AI models could identify patients at risk several hours before conventional Early Warning Scores (EWS), thereby providing a valuable window for preventive nursing interventions.[34]

Deep learning models capable of analysing continuous physiological monitoring data further improved prediction accuracy by recognizing complex nonlinear relationships among multiple clinical variables. These systems continuously updated individual patient risk profiles using real-time information from bedside monitors, pulse oximetry, electrocardiography, respiratory monitoring, and laboratory databases. Consequently, nurses received dynamic risk assessments rather than relying solely on intermittent vital sign observations, allowing earlier recognition of deteriorating clinical trajectories.[35]

Role of nursing surveillance in AI-enabled predictive care

The evidence consistently emphasized that nurses remained central to successful implementation of AI-supported predictive care. While AI algorithms generated risk predictions, nurses interpreted these outputs alongside direct patient assessment, clinical history, behavioural observations, and family concerns. Several studies highlighted those subtle indicators such as altered mental status, decreased mobility, changes in skin colour, reduced oral intake, increasing anxiety, and patient-reported symptoms frequently preceded measurable physiological abnormalities. These contextual observations could not be fully captured by current AI systems, reinforcing the indispensable role of nursing surveillance within predictive healthcare models.[36]

Furthermore, AI-assisted early warning systems improved nurses' situational awareness by prioritizing high-risk patients according to predicted deterioration probability. This facilitated more efficient allocation of nursing resources, earlier activation of rapid response teams, and timely communication with physicians. Hospitals implementing AI-supported surveillance reported improvements in workflow efficiency because nurses were able to focus their clinical attention on patients requiring immediate intervention rather than relying solely on fixed monitoring schedules.[37]

Integration of electronic health records and predictive analytics

Electronic health records represented the primary data source supporting AI-driven predictive analytics. Most studies demonstrated that integrating longitudinal patient information including previous admissions, chronic comorbidities, medication history, laboratory trends, imaging findings, nursing documentation, and physiological monitoring substantially enhanced predictive model performance. Rather than analysing isolated variables, AI systems generated comprehensive individualized risk profiles reflecting the interaction of multiple clinical factors over time.[38] The integration of structured clinical data with nursing documentation further strengthened prediction accuracy because nurses frequently recorded subtle clinical observations that were not reflected in routine physiological measurements. Consequently, modern predictive analytics increasingly recognize nursing documentation as an important contributor to early deterioration detection, highlighting the growing significance of nurses as both generators and interpreters of clinically meaningful healthcare data.

AI-enabled early warning systems and clinical decision support

The reviewed studies consistently demonstrated that AI-enhanced Early Warning Systems (EWS) outperformed conventional rule-based scoring systems, including the Modified Early Warning Score (MEWS) and National Early Warning Score (NEWS), in identifying patients at imminent risk of deterioration. Unlike traditional systems that rely on predefined thresholds for physiological parameters, AI models continuously analyse multidimensional clinical data and update individualized risk estimates in real time.[39] Several investigations reported that machine learning algorithms achieved superior discrimination for predicting sepsis, respiratory compromise, cardiac arrest, and unplanned intensive care unit admission, allowing clinicians to intervene several hours before clinical deterioration became evident through routine bedside assessment. AI-supported clinical decision support systems also reduced alarm fatigue by improving alert specificity and prioritizing clinically significant events, thereby enabling nurses to respond more efficiently to high-risk patients.

Wearable technologies, remote monitoring, and continuous surveillance

Rapid advances in wearable biosensors and Internet of Medical Things (IoMT) technologies have substantially expanded the capability of AI-enabled predictive care beyond conventional hospital monitoring. Evidence indicated that wearable devices capable of continuously recording heart rate, respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, blood pressure, skin temperature, and physical activity generated large volumes of real-time physiological data that could be analysed by AI algorithms to detect early deviations from individual baseline values.[40] Continuous monitoring proved particularly beneficial for postoperative patients, older adults, individuals with chronic diseases, and patients receiving home-based care after hospital discharge. Several studies suggested that integrating wearable technologies with AI-enabled predictive platforms facilitated earlier identification of clinical deterioration, reduced avoidable hospital readmissions, and supported continuity of nursing care across healthcare settings.

Remote patient monitoring also strengthened communication between patients and healthcare professionals by enabling nurses to review continuously updated risk scores through centralized monitoring systems. This proactive approach allowed timely telehealth consultations, medication adjustments, patient education, and referral to higher levels of care before deterioration progressed to medical emergencies. Consequently, AI-supported remote monitoring represents an important extension of nursing surveillance beyond the physical boundaries of hospitals.

Impact on patient safety and clinical outcomes

Across the reviewed literature, AI-assisted predictive care was associated with improvements in several patient safety indicators. Studies reported reductions in unexpected cardiac arrests, delayed recognition of sepsis, preventable respiratory failure, unplanned ICU transfers, hospital length of stay, and in-hospital mortality following implementation of AI-enabled predictive surveillance systems.[41] Earlier recognition of high-risk patients facilitated prompt nursing assessment, rapid escalation of care, timely administration of therapeutic interventions, and activation of multidisciplinary rapid response teams. Improvements in workflow prioritization also enabled more efficient utilization of nursing resources, particularly in high-acuity environments where staffing shortages often limit continuous bedside observation.

Several studies emphasized that AI-supported predictive analytics enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration by providing nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists, and critical care teams with a shared evidence-based assessment of patient risk. This common understanding improved communication during clinical handovers and multidisciplinary rounds while reducing delays in decision-making. Nevertheless, investigators consistently emphasized that favorable outcomes were greatest when AI recommendations were interpreted alongside comprehensive clinical assessment rather than followed automatically without professional judgment.[42]

Barriers to implementation in nursing practice

Despite encouraging clinical outcomes, the literature identified several barriers that continue to limit widespread implementation of AI-enabled predictive care within nursing practice. One of the most frequently reported challenges was limited digital literacy among healthcare professionals, particularly insufficient understanding of machine learning principles, algorithm development, and interpretation of predictive outputs.[43] Many nurses expressed uncertainty regarding the reliability of AI-generated recommendations and reported concerns about overdependence on automated systems.

Additional barriers included poor interoperability between electronic health record systems, inconsistent data quality, incomplete nursing documentation, financial constraints associated with AI infrastructure, inadequate organizational support, cybersecurity concerns, and resistance to technological change. Ethical concerns regarding algorithmic bias, transparency, explainability, accountability, patient privacy, and informed consent were also repeatedly highlighted. These findings underscore that successful implementation depends not only on technological sophistication but also on robust governance, comprehensive staff education, institutional leadership, and continuous evaluation of AI performance across diverse patient populations.[44]

Emerging trends and future directions

The reviewed evidence suggests that AI-enabled predictive care is transitioning from isolated decision-support applications toward fully integrated, intelligent healthcare ecosystems. Emerging technologies include multimodal AI models capable of simultaneously analysing physiological signals, laboratory trends, medical imaging, clinical narratives, genomics, and patient-generated health data to produce increasingly personalized risk predictions.[45] Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) has also emerged as a major research priority because transparent algorithms improve clinicians' understanding of prediction mechanisms, strengthen trust, and facilitate safe clinical decision-making.

Future healthcare systems are expected to incorporate digital twins, federated learning, ambient sensing technologies, robotic nursing assistants, and precision predictive analytics to further enhance individualized patient care. Across all studies, however, one consistent conclusion emerged: the effectiveness of AI depends fundamentally on the expertise of nurses who interpret predictive insights, integrate contextual bedside observations, communicate emerging risks and implement timely evidence-based interventions. Rather than replacing nursing practice, artificial intelligence is reshaping the profession by transforming nurses into data-informed clinical leaders responsible for integrating advanced predictive technologies with compassionate, patient-centered care.[46]

Table 1: Characteristics of key studies included in the review.

Author (year)	Country	Study design	AI technology	Clinical setting	Main findings
Topol (2019)[4]	USA	Narrative Review	Artificial Intelligence	General Healthcare	AI enhances clinical decision-making and complements clinician expertise, promoting precision medicine and improved patient outcomes.
Esteva et al (2019)[5]	USA	Narrative Review	Deep Learning	Healthcare	Deep learning demonstrated high diagnostic and predictive capabilities across multiple clinical specialties.
Buchanan et al (2020)[6]	Canada	Scoping Review	Artificial Intelligence	Nursing Practice	AI is expected to transform nursing roles, education, leadership, and clinical practice while supporting not replacing clinical judgment.
Komorowski et al (2018)[9]	United Kingdom	Machine Learning Study	Reinforcement Learning	Intensive Care Unit	AI accurately predicted optimal treatment strategies for patients with sepsis, supporting early clinical intervention.
Sutton et al (2020)[10]	Canada	Review	Clinical Decision Support System	Hospital Care	AI-supported decision support improved clinical decision-making, patient safety, and healthcare efficiency.
Ronquillo et al (2021)[11]	International	Expert Consensus	Artificial Intelligence	Nursing	Identified priorities for integrating AI into nursing education, research, clinical practice, and leadership.

Continued.

Author (year)	Country	Study design	AI technology	Clinical setting	Main findings
Jiang et al (2017)[13]	China	Narrative Review	Artificial Intelligence	Healthcare	AI demonstrated considerable potential in diagnosis, prognosis, precision medicine, and healthcare management.
Rajkomar et al (2019)[29]	USA	Review	Machine Learning	General Healthcare	Machine learning improved prediction of mortality, readmission, and clinical deterioration using electronic health records.
Yu et al (2018)[30]	USA	Narrative Review	Artificial Intelligence	Healthcare	AI applications showed significant promise in disease prediction, diagnosis, and clinical workflow optimization.
Henry et al (2015)[35]	USA	Predictive Modeling Study	TREWScore Machine Learning	Intensive Care Unit	Machine learning predicted septic shock several hours before conventional clinical recognition.
Vincent et al (2018)[36]	Europe	Expert Review	Early Warning Systems	General Hospital	Early detection systems improved recognition of patient deterioration and facilitated rapid clinical intervention.
Michard and Kalkman (2021)[37]	France	Narrative Review	Wearable Artificial Intelligence	Hospital Monitoring	Continuous wearable monitoring improved surveillance and enabled earlier recognition of patient deterioration.
Topaz et al (2016)[41]	USA	Review	Nursing Informatics & AI	Nursing Practice	AI and nursing informatics improved patient safety, documentation quality, and clinical decision-making.
Shortliffe and Sepúlveda (2018)[42]	USA	Perspective	Clinical Decision Support	Healthcare	AI should augment rather than replace clinicians, emphasizing human–AI collaboration.
Davenport and Kalakota (2019)[43]	USA	Review	Artificial Intelligence	Healthcare	AI improved diagnostic accuracy, workflow efficiency, and predictive analytics while highlighting implementation challenges.

Table 2: AI technologies used for early patient deterioration detection.

AI technology	Principle	Nursing application	Clinical outcome
Machine Learning (ML)[5,29]	Learns patterns from structured clinical data to predict patient deterioration.	Identifies high-risk patients, prioritizes nursing assessment, and supports timely escalation of care.	Earlier detection of sepsis, cardiac arrest, respiratory failure, and unplanned ICU admission; improved patient safety.
Deep Learning (DL)[5,30]	Uses multilayer neural networks to analyse complex physiological and clinical datasets.	Supports continuous patient monitoring and interpretation of high-dimensional clinical information.	Improved prediction accuracy for deterioration, mortality, and organ dysfunction.
Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS)[10,42]	Integrates AI algorithms with electronic health records to generate real-time clinical recommendations.	Assists nurses in decision-making, medication safety, and early intervention.	Reduced clinical errors, enhanced decision-making, and improved workflow efficiency.

Continued.

AI technology	Principle	Nursing application	Clinical outcome
Predictive Analytics[4,28]	Applies statistical and machine learning models to estimate future clinical risk.	Enables proactive nursing surveillance and prioritization of high-risk patients.	Earlier recognition of deterioration and reduced preventable adverse events.
Early Warning Systems (AI-Enhanced EWS)[2,36]	Continuously analyses multiple physiological variables to calculate dynamic deterioration risk.	Supports rapid response activation and frequent reassessment of unstable patients.	Reduced unexpected cardiac arrests, ICU transfers, and in-hospital mortality.
Natural Language Processing (NLP)[30]	Extracts clinically relevant information from nursing notes and unstructured electronic health records.	Identifies undocumented clinical deterioration indicators and improves nursing documentation analysis.	Enhanced clinical prediction accuracy and comprehensive patient assessment.
Reinforcement Learning[9]	Learns optimal treatment strategies through sequential clinical decision-making.	Supports evidence-based intervention planning in critically ill patients.	Improved treatment optimization and earlier management of sepsis and critical illness.
Wearable AI and Internet of Medical Things (IoMT)[37,40]	Continuously collects physiological data through wearable sensors and connected monitoring devices.	Enables continuous bedside and remote patient monitoring by nurses.	Early recognition of physiological deterioration and reduced hospital readmissions.
Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI)[45]	Produces transparent and interpretable AI predictions that clinicians can understand.	Enhances nurses' confidence in AI recommendations and supports informed clinical decisions.	Increased trust, reduced automation bias, and safer implementation of AI-assisted care.
Nursing Informatics and AI[41,49]	Integrates nursing data with AI systems to improve clinical documentation and predictive modelling.	Supports nursing assessment, care planning, documentation, and quality improvement initiatives.	Improved documentation quality, patient safety, and evidence-based nursing practice.

The findings of this narrative review demonstrate that artificial intelligence (AI) is fundamentally reshaping the approach to early patient deterioration detection by shifting healthcare delivery from reactive intervention to proactive prediction. Across the reviewed studies, AI-enabled predictive models consistently demonstrated superior capability in identifying patients at risk of adverse clinical events compared with conventional early warning systems. However, the review also highlights that technological advancement alone is insufficient to improve patient outcomes. The effectiveness of predictive analytics depends largely on the ability of nurses to interpret AI-generated information within the context of comprehensive bedside assessment, professional judgment, and individualized patient care.[47]

Nurses remain the healthcare professionals who spend the greatest amount of time with hospitalized patients, positioning them uniquely to recognize subtle behavioural, psychological, and physiological changes that may precede measurable clinical deterioration. While AI algorithms can process millions of data points rapidly, they cannot fully appreciate contextual factors such as patient anxiety, family concerns, pain expression, communication difficulties, cultural influences, or nuanced changes in functional status. Consequently, the reviewed evidence strongly supports a collaborative human-AI model in which predictive technologies enhance rather than replace nursing expertise. The combination of continuous digital surveillance and skilled clinical reasoning creates a more comprehensive approach to patient monitoring than either strategy alone.[48]

One of the most important observations emerging from this review is the expanding role of nurses as users, interpreters, and contributors to AI-enabled healthcare systems. Traditionally, nurses have been responsible for collecting physiological observations and documenting patient responses to treatment. In AI-supported healthcare environments, these responsibilities are evolving to include interpretation of predictive risk scores, validation of algorithm-generated alerts, prioritization of high-risk patients, and participation in multidisciplinary clinical decision-making. This transformation requires nurses to integrate traditional assessment skills with competencies in digital health, informatics, and data interpretation.[49]

The findings further indicate that AI-supported clinical decision support systems can improve workflow efficiency by assisting nurses in identifying patients requiring urgent attention. Such prioritization is particularly valuable in environments characterized by increasing patient acuity and persistent nursing workforce shortages. Earlier recognition of deterioration facilitates timely escalation of care, rapid response activation, optimization of treatment plans, and prevention of avoidable complications. Nevertheless, AI recommendations should always be interpreted alongside direct patient assessment because inappropriate reliance on automated systems may contribute to automation bias, reduced clinical vigilance, and delayed recognition of atypical presentations.[50]

Successful implementation of AI within nursing practice extends beyond technological capability and requires careful consideration of ethical, legal, and organizational factors. The reviewed literature consistently identified concerns regarding algorithmic bias, transparency, explainability, accountability, patient privacy, and cybersecurity. AI models trained using incomplete or non-representative datasets may generate inaccurate predictions for certain patient populations, thereby contributing to inequitable healthcare outcomes. Nurses therefore play an important advocacy role by critically evaluating AI recommendations, identifying potential discrepancies, and ensuring that patient-centered care remains the primary focus of clinical decision-making.[40]

Healthcare organizations must also invest in comprehensive education and change-management strategies to facilitate successful AI adoption. Continuous professional development programmes focusing on artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, digital literacy, ethical governance, and clinical informatics should become integral components of undergraduate nursing curricula and continuing professional education. Interdisciplinary collaboration among nurses, physicians, informaticians, engineers, and healthcare administrators will be essential to ensure that AI technologies are developed and implemented in ways that support safe, equitable, and evidence-based nursing practice.[8-10]

The findings of this review indicate that artificial intelligence is likely to become an integral component of routine nursing practice rather than a supplementary technological tool. Future healthcare systems are expected to incorporate explainable artificial intelligence (XAI), federated learning, digital twins, ambient intelligence, natural language processing, and multimodal predictive analytics to generate highly individualized risk predictions.[48] These technologies will enable continuous integration of physiological parameters, laboratory investigations, nursing documentation, imaging findings, medication records, genomic information, and patient-generated health data to support personalized clinical decision-making. However, technological sophistication must always remain aligned with the principles of patient-centered, ethical, and compassionate nursing care.

The transition toward predictive healthcare will also redefine nursing leadership. Nurses will increasingly participate in AI governance, algorithm validation, digital innovation, and implementation science to ensure that predictive technologies remain clinically relevant, equitable, and safe. Their involvement in system design and evaluation will be essential to minimize algorithmic bias, improve usability, and strengthen clinician trust. Consequently, nursing education should incorporate competencies related to artificial intelligence, health informatics, data science, ethical decision-making, and digital professionalism to prepare graduates for technology-enabled healthcare environments.[41-45]

Clinical implications

The integration of AI into nursing practice has important implications for patient safety, clinical workflow, healthcare quality, and professional development. AI-assisted predictive analytics can enhance nursing surveillance, facilitate earlier recognition of deterioration, improve prioritization of patient care, reduce preventable adverse events, and optimize utilization of healthcare resources.

However, successful implementation depends on adequate education, interdisciplinary collaboration, institutional support, and preservation of clinical judgment. Nurses should be actively involved in the development, validation, implementation, and evaluation of AI systems to ensure that technological innovations remain aligned with the principles of holistic, ethical, and patient-centered care.

CONCLUSION

Artificial intelligence has emerged as a transformative innovation that is reshaping the early recognition of patient deterioration by enabling proactive, data-driven clinical decision-making. The evidence synthesized in this review demonstrates that AI-enabled predictive analytics improve the identification of patients at risk for clinical deterioration through continuous analysis of physiological, laboratory, and electronic health record data. These technologies consistently outperform traditional rule-based early warning systems in predicting adverse clinical events and provide valuable opportunities for earlier intervention. Despite these technological advances, nurses remain the cornerstone of effective predictive care. AI cannot replace professional nursing judgment, therapeutic communication, holistic assessment, ethical reasoning, or compassionate patient-centered care. Instead, AI functions as an intelligent clinical partner that enhances nursing surveillance, supports prioritization of high-risk patients, facilitates timely escalation of care, and strengthens interdisciplinary collaboration. The greatest improvements in patient safety are achieved when predictive algorithms are integrated with comprehensive bedside assessment and evidence-based nursing interventions. Successful implementation of AI-enabled predictive care requires investment in workforce education, digital literacy, organizational infrastructure, ethical governance, cybersecurity, and continuous evaluation of algorithm performance across diverse patient populations.

Healthcare organizations must ensure transparency, accountability, fairness, and explainability throughout AI development and implementation to maintain clinician confidence and protect patient rights. As healthcare increasingly transitions toward predictive, preventive, and personalized models of care, nurses will continue to play a central leadership role in translating AI-generated insights into safe, equitable, and effective clinical practice.

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