

ARTICLE

Where to focus first: Administrative processes to prioritize for AI-driven transformation

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<https://www.chartis.com/insights/where-focus-first-administrative-processes-prioritize-ai-driven-transformation>

Health systems have a growing opportunity to use AI to reset the administrative cost base. But not every process is equally well positioned for AI-driven transformation, and not every opportunity will create the same level of value.

Organizations should first confirm that the opportunity aligns with the enterprise's strategic goals, then assess functional opportunities across three dimensions: agentic readiness, adoptability, and impact. This discipline helps health systems move beyond pilots and fragmented use cases toward the opportunities with the strongest potential to scale and create measurable value.

How to assess where AI-driven transformation should start

We recommend assessing functional opportunities across three dimensions:

1. **Agentic readiness:** Does the nature of the work make it suitable for AI to perform, coordinate, or support effectively?
2. **Adoptability:** Will people use it and experience it as helpful?
3. **Impact:** Will it create measurable impact while managing risk?

The strongest opportunities sit at the intersection of these three dimensions. The work has characteristics that make it suitable for AI-driven transformation, users will trust and adopt the solution, and the transformation will create measurable enterprise impact.

Three intersecting criteria identify administrative processes with the greatest potential for AI-driven transformation

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Ambient documentation is a useful example. Adoption has accelerated rapidly, with more than 60% of hospitals now using ambient AI documentation tools. The task is well suited to AI, addresses a clear and pressing need to reduce physician burden, and creates benefits that matter to both clinicians and the enterprise.

While many organizations are still quantifying the full financial impact, early results suggest that ambient documentation can save time, improve physician satisfaction, strengthen documentation quality, and potentially free capacity for additional clinical activity.

1. Agentic readiness: Can AI perform, coordinate, or support the work effectively?

Agentic readiness assesses whether the health system’s administrative process has the technical, data, and knowledge conditions required for agentic AI to perform, coordinate, or support the work effectively.

Metric
Assessment criteria
Standardization The work follows recognizable patterns, with variation that the health system and its AI tools can categorize and manage.
Verifiability The health system can validate correctness using rules, reference data, historical outcomes, documentation standards, or system logic.
Data maturity The necessary data is available, reliable, structured enough for AI use, and accessible through systems or integrations.
Stakeholder simplicity

The work does not depend heavily on trust-building, negotiation, emotional intelligence, or high-touch stakeholder management.

Knowledge clarity

The work is based on explicit rules, decision criteria, and observable patterns, rather than experience or intuition that's hard to articulate and codify.

2. Adoptability: Will people use it and experience it as helpful?

Adoptability assesses whether an AI-driven solution would solve a real problem, can work in practice, and be trusted by users and stakeholders.

Metric

Assessment criteria

Pain point

The process is time-consuming, manual, duplicative, delayed, frustrating, or error-prone.

User benefit

AI would improve speed, accuracy, consistency, completeness, user experience, or administrative effort.

Operational fit

The health system can embed the solution into current systems, handoffs, and decision points without adding major complexity.

Trustworthiness

The people responsible for the work can confidently explain, review, correct, and use the output.

3. Impact: Will it create measurable impact while limiting risk?

Impact assesses whether the AI opportunity has a strong business case, manageable risk, and a path to scale.

Metric

Assessment criteria

Demand

The process occurs frequently enough or affects enough transactions, cases, or users to justify AI-driven transformation and create meaningful impact.

Value creation: cost

The opportunity can reduce operating costs, improve productivity, shorten cycle time, increase efficiency, or expand workforce capacity.

Value creation: outcomes

The opportunity can improve quality, compliance, revenue capture, patient or employee experience, or other strategic outcomes.

Net value realization

The health system can realize the expected value after accounting for build costs, integration, change management, monitoring, maintenance, governance, and any added burden to other departments.

Measurability

The health system can track benefits through clear operational, financial, quality, compliance, experience, or workforce metrics.

Scalability

The health system can extend or reuse the AI capability across additional teams, sites, functions, populations, workflows, or use cases without disproportionate added cost or complexity.

Error Tolerance

AI mistakes would be low risk, detectable, recoverable, or containable through controls.

Regulatory manageability

The health system can safely use the AI within applicable regulatory, accreditation, contractual, and policy requirements without materially increasing risk or exposure.

Deliver early AI success by focusing on targeted administrative use cases

AI-driven transformation requires more than identifying promising use cases. Health systems need a disciplined way to focus on the administrative opportunities most likely to create measurable value and build momentum toward a broader administrative cost reset.

Rather than pursuing every possible AI application, organizations should sequence the administrative opportunities where the work is suitable for AI-driven transformation, users are likely to adopt the solution, and the impact justifies the investment.

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How AI can reset healthcare's administrative cost structure

Agentic AI creates an opportunity to manage cost and service performance together, rather than as competing priorities. We examine what this would look like in the supply chain and revenue cycle.

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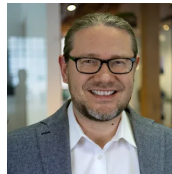
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