Venture Center hosts workshop to explore transformative opportunities in AI & healthcare

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The event delved into the opportunities, challenges, and diverse applications of AI in healthcare

Venture Center, Pune hosted a successful 'AI in Healthcare' Workshop on 11 November, bringing together industry experts, healthcare innovators, and investors to explore AI's vast potential to revolutionise healthcare.

Supported by BFI-BIOME, the event delved into the opportunities, challenges, and diverse applications of AI across drug discovery, diagnostics, patient care, and public health, providing practical insights and valuable networking for startups and innovators focused on AI-driven healthcare technology.

The workshop opened with a perspective talk by Dr Anand Deshpande, Founder and Chairman of Persistent Systems, who highlighted the massive $208 billion potential AI holds in healthcare by 2030. He emphasised the need for AI-driven solutions that could shift healthcare from reactive spending to preventive care, urging careful investment in AI infrastructure, hardware, and skilled talent to unlock its full potential.

Exploring AI's Role in Healthcare – Opportunities and Challenges

The panel discussion that followed examined AI's role in improving drug discovery, refining clinical trials for better outcomes, and enhancing both patient and provider experiences. Panelists discussed the importance of integrating AI seamlessly into

healthcare workflows to maximise its impact, while noting the strides already made with non-invasive diagnostics and enhanced imaging accuracy. They also addressed ethical considerations and regulatory frameworks needed to balance AI's advancements with patient privacy and accessibility. The panel featured Santosh Dixit, Nandini Sahasrabuddhe, Gaurav Tripathi, Ashutosh Pathak, Pankaj Doshi, and Kedar Medhi.

Startup Mixer Spotlights Emerging AI-Driven Solutions

One of the workshop's highlights was the Startup Mixer, where ten early-stage startups presented lightning pitches demonstrating AI's versatility in healthcare - From public health delivery and digital health solutions to diagnostics and traditional medicine. CareNx and Adiuvo Diagnostics took top honours, with support for the awards generously provided by Indus Biotech.

Investor Perspectives on AI in Healthcare

In the final session, a panel of investors shared perspectives on evaluating and supporting AI-driven healthcare startups. Emphasising a cautious yet optimistic approach, investors noted the importance of identifying genuine use cases where AI can effectively address real-world problems. The discussion touched on essential criteria like data sustainability, development of evaluation frameworks for assessing AI companies., and clarity in regulations leading to bigger AI-focused investments in healthcare. Panelists include Maneesh Bhandari, Madhukar Bhatia, Kiran Deshpande, Sanjay Kanvinde, Tanvi Ghate, and Amey Mashelkar.

"This is an evolving space with exciting possibilities, and we're thrilled to have facilitated this forum for knowledge-sharing and insights," said Dr Premnath, Director - Venture Center.