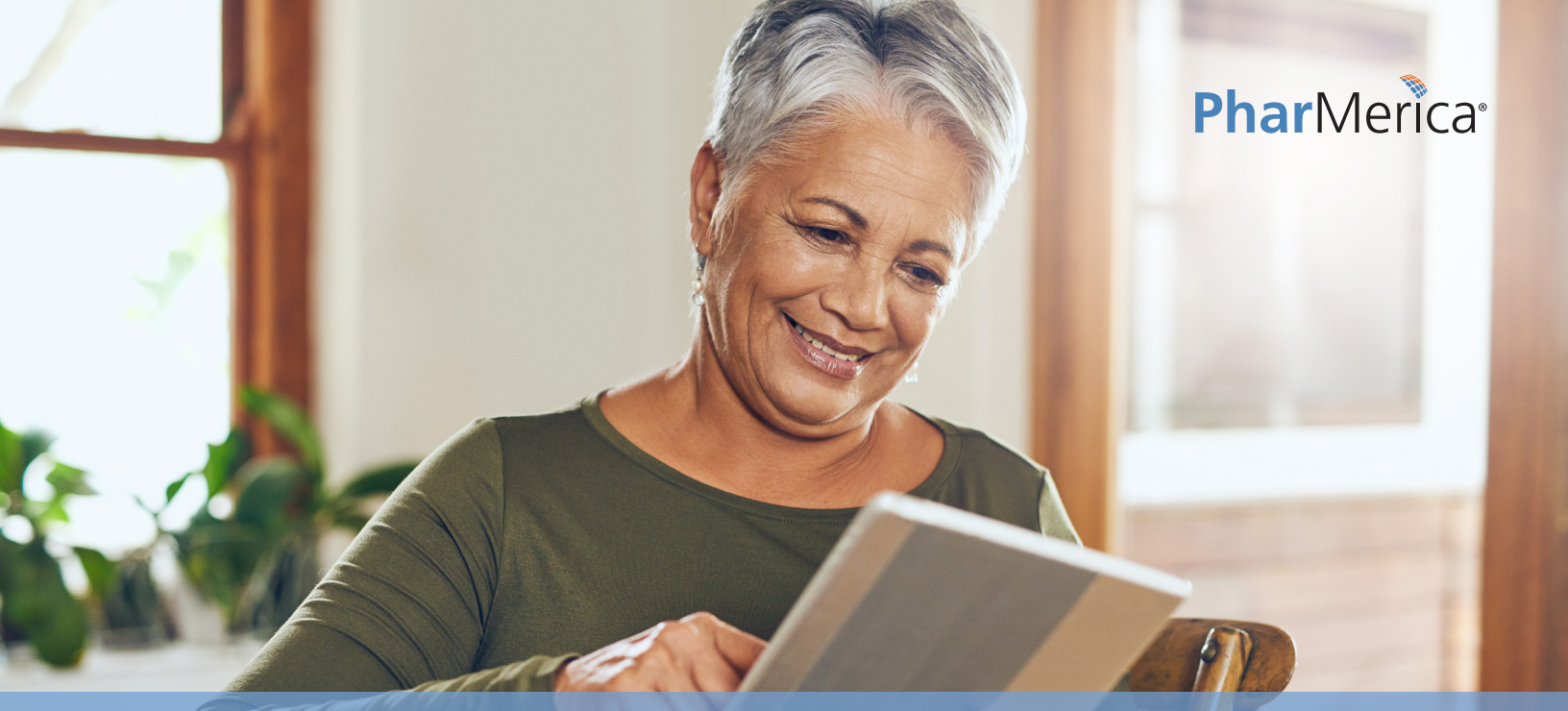




The Future of Aging: Resident Engagement & Responsible AI

With the over-65 population predicted to represent nearly [a quarter of the U.S. population by 2050](#), it is more urgent than ever to understand the top challenges, needs, and opportunities for resident and caregiver engagement. This was among the issues Randall Rutta, MA, CEO of the National Health Council (NHC) addressed in his session, *Critical Issues & Actions Driving the Health of People as They Age*, at the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists' recent annual meeting.

Rutta's insights included:

Residents want to be active participants in their care. Their top priorities include access, affordability, innovation, and engagement. Best practices in engagement include involving the resident/family from the very beginning, valuing the expertise of residents comparably with that of other experts, regarding caregiver expertise as supplementary to and not a replacement for resident expertise, and keeping residents informed about their care. He added that residents and families want and need better education about insurance coverage programs and costs.

Negative attitudes about the health care system are common. In a recent study of residents and caregivers,¹ a lack of compassion from the health care system was frequently mentioned as a detriment to emotional health.

Assumptions can be dangerous. Actions that deter or hinder effective resident engagement include assuming what is most important to a resident, inviting resident engagement only when it is too late for it to influence the outcome, using language that isolates the resident from fully participating, and using a single resident's opinion to represent an entire resident population.

Pharmacists play a key role in engagement. Pharmacists make vital contributions that support residents and strengthen public health through medication management, resident education, preventive care, and more.

The Role of AI

Rutta emphasized the role of technology in the future of quality health care and resident/caregiver engagement. He stressed that practitioners need to understand both the promises and the pitfalls of AI.

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Among the promises are: improved diagnosis and prognosis determination; clinical decision support tools; predictive and remote monitoring; and more efficient, focused drug development and optimizations. The pitfalls include: privacy concerns and data breaches; algorithmic bias; transcription inaccuracy; and errors in data interpretation. While AI can be a valuable tool, Rutta cautioned against providers leaning too heavily on it for decision making and care planning and emphasized that person-centered care remains the top priority.

Rutta shared the NHC's 13 considerations on health AI² to help guide practitioners:

- Resident health benefit
- Resident-centered and informed
- Resident education and empowerment
- Equity and accessibility
- Trustworthiness
- Comprehensive transparency
- Bias mitigations
- Privacy and security
- Human collaboration
- Continuous improvement
- Safety and effectiveness
- Accountability
- Ethical considerations

The NHC, Rutta noted, recently established the [PXI: Resident Experience and Innovation Center](#), a resource designed to ensure that “any activity aimed at shaping the future of health care by leveraging health AI, digital health, and other technologies – from research to diagnosis to treatment, from access and efficiency to policy and practice – reflects the realities and priorities of residents and their caregivers.” PXI connects residents and innovators for ongoing engagement, education, and transformative use of AI, digital health, and technology.

The NHC's Future Focus

Rutta's insights reflect some key areas of focus for the NHC in the coming years. These include advancing resident-driven health policy and practices, prioritizing resident input in health decision-making, and advancing health equity. “We remain committed to ensuring that resident voices are heard, their needs are prioritized, and their health outcomes are improved,” he emphasized.

¹ Schoch SC, Escontrias OA. Characterizing and Prioritizing Unmet Medical Needs Across the Patient and Family Caregiver Communities Workshop report. Unpublished manuscript. National Health Council, 2025

²National Health Council. The National Health Council's Principles on Health AI. Unpublished manuscript. 2024.