

Jess Bunin, MD, Reveals AI's Promise and Pitfalls in Medicine—and Why Empathy Matters Most

Dr. Jess Bunin explains why technology must support, not replace, the human connection at the heart of medicine

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming healthcare, influencing how physicians are trained, how medical decisions are supported, and how patient care is delivered. However, physician and medical education expert [Jess Bunin](#), MD, MHPE, says one element remains irreplaceable: the empathy and human connection required to provide quality healthcare.

"AI can analyze information, recognize patterns, and support physicians in making complex decisions, but it cannot understand a patient's fears, interpret the emotions behind their story, or build the trust that comes from a genuine human connection," says Dr. Bunin. "The future of healthcare depends on embracing technology while ensuring that empathy remains at the center of medicine."

As the Military Health System and healthcare organizations continue integrating artificial intelligence into medical education and clinical environments, Dr. Bunin emphasizes that medicine requires more than data and algorithms.

"After years of working in the ICU, I have learned that quality healthcare requires understanding, compassion, and communication," explains Dr. Bunin. "Patients are increasingly turning to AI tools for answers, but relying solely on AI for diagnosis can be risky. Physicians and patients must communicate to ensure accurate diagnoses and appropriate treatment."

Drawing from her research published in the Journal of Critical Care, Dr. Bunin explores why



Dr. Jess Bunin

empathy remains one of the most important tools in healthcare. Her research examines how physicians use empathy to strengthen communication, build trust, and provide care that recognizes patients as individuals.

Her qualitative study, "[The Weight of the Pager on My Hip](#): Lightening the Load of Empathy on Critical Care Physicians by Understanding Its Limitations," found that while empathy is essential to compassionate care, physicians must develop strategies to manage its emotional demands and prevent compassion fatigue and burnout.

"The goal is not to reduce empathy, but to help physicians develop sustainable empathy—remaining connected to their patients while protecting their own well-being," says Dr. Bunin.

Her earlier research, "[The Burden They Bear](#): A Scoping Review of Physician Empathy in the Intensive Care Unit," examined 45 publications and found that effective empathy requires balance. Physicians must remain emotionally present while maintaining the professional perspective needed to make objective clinical decisions and provide equitable, patient-centered care.

"Empathy in medicine is not an all-or-nothing concept," explains Dr. Bunin. "The future of healthcare depends on preserving the compassion that builds trust while ensuring physicians have the resilience to continue caring for their patients effectively."

As artificial intelligence becomes more integrated into medical education, Dr. Bunin believes future physicians must combine technological expertise with communication, emotional intelligence, and empathy.

"Medicine has always been about understanding the person behind the diagnosis," concludes Dr. Bunin. "Technology can help physicians access information and make decisions, but empathy is what allows physicians to truly understand their patients and provide the quality care they deserve."

About Jess Bunin, MD, MHPE

Jess Bunin, MD, MHPE, is a physician and medical education expert focused on advancing healthcare training, physician development, communication, and patient-centered care. Her research explores physician empathy, medical education, and how healthcare professionals can maintain meaningful connections with patients while navigating the emotional challenges of modern medicine.

To learn more, click here: <https://jessbuninmd.com/>

Dr. Jess Bunin is available for interviews.

Amanda Kent
Boundless Media USA
+1 313-403-5636
[email us here](#)

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