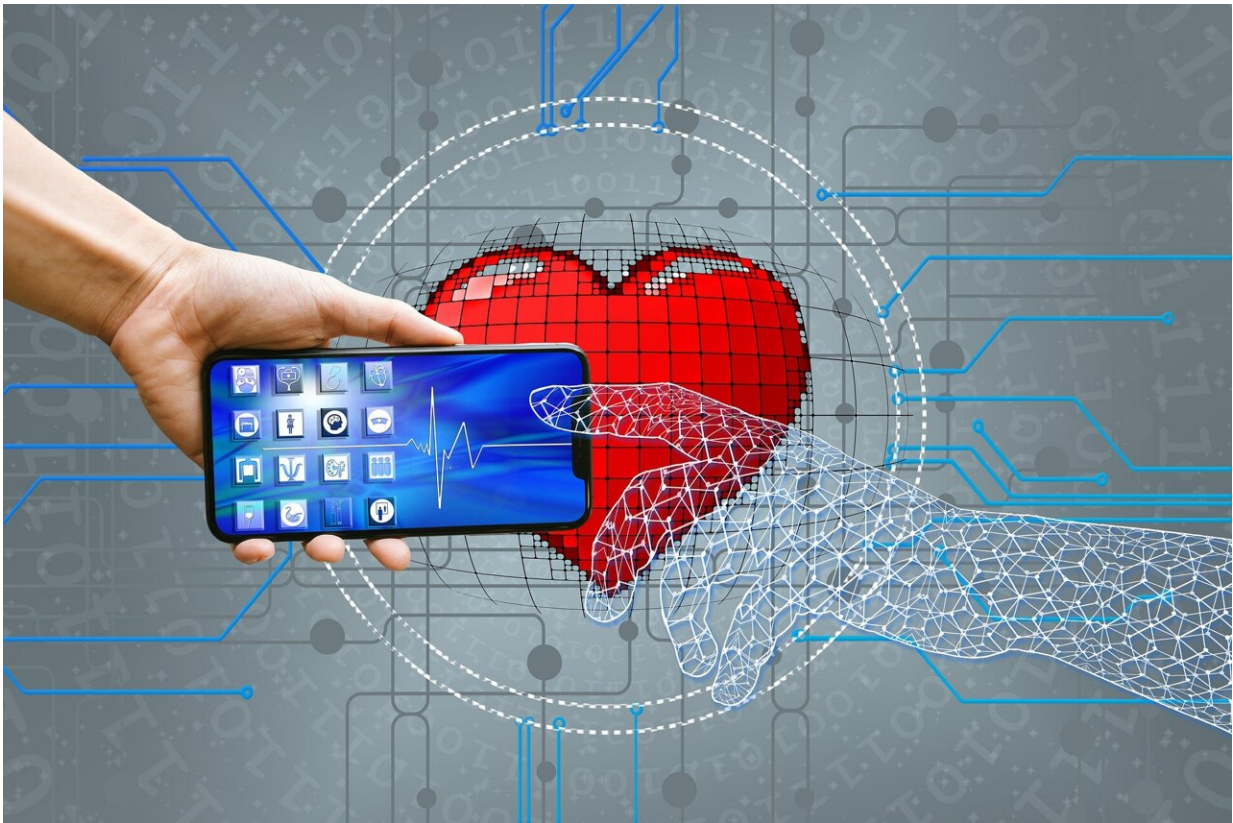


Researchers investigate how health care will change over the next 50 years

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Developments in technology are moving forward rapidly and over the next 50 years, health care across the globe will change, including an increased use of AI and robotics. Trends also show that climate change,

hunger and diseases may affect how the sector will change. A study by researchers at Mälardalen University (MDU) describes what our future health care industry may look like.

In the study published in *Futures*, the researchers describe significant trends and factors that are expected to affect the development of health and [medical care](#) over the next 50 years. The researchers have based their conclusions on interviews with [medical experts](#) and extensive experiences in the health care market.

Research shows that in the short term, in the next 5–10 years, we are expected to see an increase in welfare technology in the industry, with the use of AI and robotics. Telemedicine, which comprises remote medical care, is also expected to increase, as is value-based health care where hospitals are funded based on results.

In the medium term, in 10–30 years, an increase in data-informed personalization in health care is expected. This type of medicine utilizes a patient's personal data to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases. Wearable devices are typically used to improve patients' well-being in cardiology, neurology, and diabetes and are expected to have a significant impact on the development of this type of medical care.

"This type of patient-oriented health care represents a transition from traditional to more innovative and personal approaches," says Ignat Kulkov, researcher and postdoc at MDU.

In the long term, in 30–50 years, there is likely to be an increase in antibiotic resistance, but also an improvement in the available antibiotics. The researchers also believe that technological developments and our increased pace of life will lead to a higher number of cases of depression and obsessive-compulsive disorders for instance.

In the medium and long term, health care will probably also be affected by [climate change](#), which in the worst case can lead to hunger, violence and an increased risk of diseases. There are also major risks that the most vulnerable and poorest members of society will be most affected by the impact of climate change.

"The ability to adapt to and respond to these unpredictable situations will be crucial for the future development of the health care industry," says Ignat Kulkov.

Increased sustainability contributes to development

The study also highlights that an increased focus on sustainability may contribute positively to the development of the health care industry. Sustainable medicine, with reduced [carbon emissions](#) and increased use of recyclable materials in health care environments, is expected to become increasingly important and provide a competitive advantage. This may promote innovation, improve resources and have a positive impact on development, according to Ignat Kulkov.

"We consider it vital for the health care industry and society to understand where medical care is heading and its trends and development prospects. Society should acknowledge and more accurately predict the capabilities and resources required for implementing new approaches to providing medical care. We believe the industry's main stakeholders, such as doctors, patients and policymakers, as well as supplier companies, [insurance companies](#) and universities, will create a demand for these results. The study can serve as a foundation for creating a more adaptable and sustainable [health care](#) and medical system for the future," says Ignat Kulkov.

More information: Julia Kulkova et al, Medicine of the future: How and who is going to treat us?, *Futures* (2023). [DOI](#):

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