



## Why Hands-On Care is Essential in Modern Healthcare

AI and digital health have been sweeping the healthcare industry in recent years, streamlining administrative processes, improving diagnostic accuracy, and enhancing patient monitoring. And while we have seen major improvements in the industry with these advancements, there is one element technology just can't seem to replicate: **the human touch.**

Hands-on care—where real humans speak face-to-face, and patients receive the highest level of in-person care and connection—is irreplaceable.

“At Fulcrum Health, we believe that compassionate, hands-on care is the cornerstone of true wellness,” says Patricia Dennis, CEO of Fulcrum Health. “AI can support clinical decisions, but it’s the empathy, intuition, and presence of a skilled provider that truly make the difference.”

While AI and digital health have undoubtedly improved the healthcare space and increased efficiency across multiple sectors, these technologies still come with limitations.

A recent [Cedars-Sinai study](#) found that while AI was better at noticing critical red flags—such as antibiotic-resistant infections—physicians excelled at gathering nuanced patient histories and adapting care accordingly.

And in 2024, a [Stanford study](#) evaluating the diagnostic accuracy of physicians using ChatGPT found that the AI program made no difference in the ability of the physician to diagnose a patient based on a number of health factors.

Additionally, a [2023 study](#) looking at AI bias in medical system designs found that half of the sampled studies had a high risk of bias across sociodemographic data, incomplete datasets, and algorithm designs.

## The Importance of Hands-On Care

Human connection is at the heart of effective healthcare. In-person interactions between healthcare providers and patients build trust, foster empathy, and create a supportive environment for healing.

The bottom line: while these technologies may augment the patient care experience, they can never replace it.

So where does Fulcrum Health come in?

Fulcrum Health champions hands-on care. With services across chiropractic medicine, acupuncture, physical therapy, massage therapy, and speech language therapy, human connection is what powers these patient-doctor interactions, and what ultimately leads to longer healing and better health outcomes.

“Hands-on care provides two key advantages over AI or digital approaches,” Dr. Vivi-Ann Fischer, DC, from Fulcrum Health, says. “First, it more effectively identifies sources of pain and produces measurable physiological benefits such as reduced discomfort, improved nerve function, muscle relaxation, and enhanced joint mobility. Second, human interaction fosters stronger communication and collaboration, leading to a more personalized and effective treatment plan.”

Benefits of in-person healthcare:

- Hands-on assessment capabilities
- Diagnostic accuracy for complex cases
- The opportunity to build emotional connection and trust
- Immediate access to testing and procedures
- Reduced risk of miscommunication
- Privacy and data security

Fulcrum network providers understand the importance of the human touch. Our networks’ physical medicine services are designed to ensure that patients receive the best possible care through direct human interaction.

One [study comparing the need for follow-up care when using primary care physicians across in-person, video, and telephonic formats](#), found that when treating musculoskeletal (MSK) issues, video visits result in 9.9% needing follow-up care and telephonic visits result in 14.9% needing follow-up care.

Additionally, researchers of the study found that when treating lower back pain, 5.9% of video visits needed a follow-up visit and 8.1% of telephone visits needed a follow-up visit. Comparing this to in-person primary care, only 1.7% needed follow-up visits for MSK & 1.4% needed follow-up for back pain.

These numbers don’t just illustrate the effectiveness of in-person care; patients say the same.

A [mixed-methods study](#) examining patients' perspectives toward telemedicine versus in-person visits found that "patients believed that an in-person visit allows for a thorough and comprehensive physical examination."

Out of the 1,226 participants who completed the questionnaire, 865 (71%) preferred in-person visits, while 361 (29%) preferred telemedicine.

The primary reasons for selecting an in-person visit were:

- More precise and accurate decision-making by physicians
- Increased physician attention to the patients
- Lowered risk of medical errors
- Improved patient assessment accuracy
- More comprehensive understanding of the individual's condition

Researchers of the study also gathered anonymous patient testimonials to support these findings.

Participant 321, for example, said "I have more faith in my treatment process during in-person visits, expecting quicker and more effective care."

"In my view, in-person visits are unmatched by telemedicine," Participant 505 said. "I strongly believe they offer superior, more accurate, and effective treatment."

### **Physical Medicine Forward**

At Fulcrum Health, we believe in connecting people to hands-on treatment for muscle and joint pain. Our award-winning network, expert guidance, innovative thinking, personalized service, and focus on flexibility are all part of our commitment to moving Physical Medicine Forward.

By facilitating connections between providers, health plans, employers, and patients, we aim to lower healthcare costs while achieving better outcomes by unlocking the full potential of physical medicine.

We invite you to partner with Fulcrum Health and explore what moving Physical Medicine Forward can mean for your health plan and members. Together, we can ensure that the human touch remains at the heart of healthcare.

**About Fulcrum Health**

Fulcrum Health, Inc. is a non-profit, NCQA accredited, physical medicine leader delivering quality care through its credentialed provider networks for over 40 years. Its physical medicine networks include chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, and physical therapy. Serving over 2.5 million members, Fulcrum continues to offer innovative and inspiring ways to leverage physical medicine that help lower health care costs, achieve better outcomes, and increase patient satisfaction. Fulcrum Health's chiropractic network is a multiple year recipient of the Press Ganey Guardian of Excellence Award for outstanding performance in patient satisfaction.

**Interested in partnering with Fulcrum Health? [Let's chat.](#)**