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| **ITU-T Focus Group on AI for Health** | |
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| **Abstract:** | This document contains the Call for Participation in the Topic Group “Dental Diagnostics and Digital Dentistry” (TG-Dental). The purpose of the Call for Participation is to call on members of the medical and artificial intelligence communities with a vested interest in the topic to become engaged in the TG-Dental. |

*NOTE – For public distribution of this call for participation, remove this cover page.*

ITU/WHO Focus Group on artificial intelligence for health (FG-AI4H)

Call for Topic Group Participation: Dental Diagnostics and Digital Dentistry

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU)/World Health Organization (WHO) Focus Group on “Artificial Intelligence for Health” (FG-AI4H; <https://itu.int/go/fgai4h>) seeks engagement from members of the medical and artificial intelligence (AI) communities (including clinicians, technologists, entrepreneurs, potential benchmarking data providers, machine learning experts, software developers, researchers, regulators, policy-makers, companies/institutions, and field experts) with a vested interest in shaping the benchmarking process of dental diagnostics and digital dentistry.

# About FG-AI4H

Over the past decade, considerable resources have been allocated to exploring the use of AI for health, which has revealed an immense potential. Yet, due to the complexity of AI models, it is difficult to understand their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. If the technology is poorly designed or the underlying training data are biased or incomplete, errors or problematic results can occur. AI technology can only be used with complete confidence if it has been quality controlled through a rigorous evaluation in a standardized way. Towards developing this standard assessment framework of AI for health, the ITU has established FG-AI4H in partnership with the WHO.

Thus far, FG-AI4H has established several topic groups, including AI and cardiovascular disease risk prediction, child growth monitoring, dermatology, falls among the elderly, histopathology, neuro-cognitive diseases, ophthalmology (retinal imaging diagnostics), psychiatry, radiotherapy, snakebite and snake identification, symptom assessment, tuberculosis, volumetric chest computed tomography, and dental diagnostics and digital dentistry.

Each topic group agrees upon representative benchmarking tasks in a pragmatic, best-practice approach, which can later be scaled and expanded to similar tasks. Every benchmarking task should address a health problem of relevance (e.g. impacting a large and diverse part of the global population or challenging to treat) and for which AI technology would provide a tangible improvement relative to the current practice (e.g. better care, results, and/or cost/time effectiveness).

For a rigorous and sound evaluation, undisclosed test data sets must be available (or have to be collected) for each task. All data must be of high quality and compliant with ethical and legal standards. In addition, the data must originate from a variety of sources so that it can be determined whether an AI algorithm can generalize across different conditions, locations, or settings (e.g. across different people, hospitals, and/or measurement devices). The format/properties of the data serving as input to the AI and of the output expected from the AI, as well as the benchmarking metrics are agreed upon and specified by the topic group.

Finally, the AI-to-be-evaluated will be benchmarked with the undisclosed test data on FG-AI4H computing infrastructure. Here, the AI will process single samples of the undisclosed test data set and predict output variables, which will be compared with the "ground truth." The results of the benchmarking will be provided to the AI developers and will appear on a (potentially anonymized) leaderboard.

# Topic group: Dental Diagnostics and Digital Dentistry

A topic group is a community of stakeholders from the medical and AI communities with a shared interest in a topic. The objectives of the topic groups are manifold:

1. to provide a forum for open communication among various stakeholders,
2. to agree upon the benchmarking tasks of this topic and scoring metrics,
3. to facilitate the collection of high-quality labelled test data from different sources,
4. to clarify the input and output format of the test data,
5. to define and set-up the technical benchmarking infrastructure, and
6. to coordinate the benchmarking process in collaboration with the Focus Group management and working groups.

The primary output of a topic group is one document that describes all aspects of how to perform the benchmarking for this topic. (The document will be developed in a cooperative way by suggesting changes as input documents for the next FG-AI4H meeting that will then be discussed and integrated into an official output document of this meeting. The process will continue over several meetings until the topic description document is ready for performing the first benchmarking.)

This topic group is dedicated to dental diagnostics and digital dentistry. Dental conditions, like caries or periodontitis or tooth loss, are among the most prevalent diseases of humankind, affecting up to 98% of a population. Direct treatment costs due to dental diseases globally were estimated at US $298 billion annually, corresponding to an average of 4.6% of global health expenditure. The burden emanating from oral diseases is comparable to that from diabetes or cardiovascular diseases. The majority of the world's 1.6 million dentists are based in Europe and the Americas, such that 69% of the world's dentists serve 27% of the global population. Africa has only 1% of the global workforce. The overall workforce in dentistry exceeds 10 million worldwide. Diagnostics in dentistry largely relies on dentists diagnosing diseases via a combination of dental history taking, clinical investigation and imaging as well, if required, further physical or (bio)chemical or microbiologic assessments. AI will help to (1) improve the accuracy of each of these individual tasks, (2) allow the integration of different data with higher effectiveness than the individual can do this, (3) without ease also longitudinally assess these data, compare them over time, and hence allow predictions, (4) reduce the reliance of diagnosis making from the dentist, expanding the scope of dental auxiliary staff, thereby increasing the access and efficiency of dental services, and (5) enable patients and healthy individuals to better participate into their dental health experience and management. AI will pave the way to a more personalized, precise, preventive and participatory dentistry for more people worldwide. It has the potential to aid in overcoming current ineffective, expensive care models. Benchmarking is expected to yield more robust models and algorithms, with initially lower accuracy compared with current validation strategies (largely in-sample). Benchmarking is further expected to allow transparent comparisons of different models and algorithms.

More details about the activities of the topic group can be found in the (forthcoming) topic description document, which can be accessed with a free ITU account (cf. “Get involved”).

Current members of the topic group on Dental Diagnostics and Digital Dentistry include Prof. Dr. Falk Schwendicke and Dr. Joachim Krois from Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin. Prof. Dr. Falk Schwendicke is deputy head of operative and preventive dentistry at the dental clinic at Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Europe's largest university hospital. He is a specialist in dental diagnostics, preventive and operative dentistry. He has extensive experience in both practice and university dentistry and is author of >300 scientific articles, author and editor of 20 book chapters or books. Dr. Joachim Krois is senior data scientist at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin and

project lead for the project “Deep Learning for Dental Image Diagnostics”. He is an academic lecturer and cooperate trainer for coding, statistics, machine learning and scientific computing.

The topic group would benefit from further expertise of the medical and AI communities and from additional data. In particular we want to invite groups that are working with dental imagery, such as X-rays, CBCT, scans and photographs, among others.

# Get involved

To join this topic group, please send an e-mail to the focus group secretariat ([tsbfgai4h@itu.int](mailto:tsbfgai4h@itu.int)) and the topic driver ([falk.schwendicke@charite.de](mailto:falk.schwendicke@charite.de)). Please use a descriptive e-mail subject (e.g. “Participation topic group AI for Dental Diagnostics and Digital Dentistry”), briefly introduce yourself and your organization, concisely describe your relevant experience and expertise, and explain your interest in the topic group.

Participation in FG-AI4H is free of charge and open to all. To attend the workshops and meetings, please visit the Focus Group website (<https://itu.int/go/fgai4h>), where you can also find the whitepaper, get access to the documentation, and sign up to the mailing list.

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