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WHO unveils digital health promoter harnessing generative AI for public health

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Trained to provide information across major health topics

The World Health Organization (WHO) has announced the launch of S.A.R.A.H., a digital health promoter prototype with enhanced empathetic response powered by generative artificial intelligence (AI).

S.A.R.A.H. is a Smart AI Resource Assistant for Health that represents an evolution of AI-powered health information avatars, using new language models and cutting-edge technology. It can engage users 24 hours a day in 8 languages on multiple health topics, on any device.

WHO's digital health promoter is trained to provide information across major health topics, including healthy habits and mental health, to help people optimise their health and well-being journey. It aims to provide an additional tool for people to realize their rights to health, wherever they are.

S.A.R.A.H., also known as Sarah, has the ability to support people in developing better understanding of risk factors for some of the leading causes of death in the world, including cancer, heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes. She can help people access up-to-date information on quitting tobacco, being active, eating a healthy diet, and de-stressing among other things.

WHO calls for continued research on this new technology to explore potential benefits to public health and to better understand the challenges. While AI has enormous potential to strengthen public health it also raises important ethical concerns, including equitable access, privacy, safety and accuracy, data protection, and bias.