

Empathy in an Age of Mechanization

Alfredo Eymann[®] y Daniel Matusevich[®]

Revista del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires. Universidad Hospital Italiano. Argentina

Empathy, or its absence, is becoming increasingly central in the world of biomedicine.

No one today disputes its crucial role in the physician–patient relationship, in treatment adherence, in communicating bad news, or in identifying psychosocial needs.

Its absence increases the risk of dehumanization, communication errors, and overall dissatisfaction among both patients and healthcare teams.

An empathetic environment enhances collaboration, reduces conflict, and protects against professional burnout; its absence fuels burnout, staff turnover, and a cold organizational culture.

Empathy must serve as the compass guiding priorities in healthcare, and it should be integrated into training, leadership, and organizational design as a strategic necessity to ensure quality, safety, and equity.

The work by Alex Baraglia, presented in this issue, offers a novel and insightful perspective by shifting the traditional focus from clinical staff to administrative personnel, pointing out that their empathetic behavior directly influences both the patient experience and organizational dynamics. The author combines evolutionary, neuroscientific, philosophical, and

management perspectives to argue that empathy should be conceived not merely as an individual competence but as a structural resource that requires institutional policies and targeted training.

In a world where machines are becoming increasingly human-like and humans are becoming increasingly mechanized, we encounter a paradox: certain artificial intelligence algorithms display higher levels of empathy in customer service interactions than human operators themselves. Yet healthcare transcends any algorithmic simulation: it is a complex, multidimensional act in which contexts, relationships, and a chain of integrated individuals intertwine to sustain well-being. Within that fabric, as Baraglia emphasizes, administrative workers occupy a crucial role whose empathetic practice impacts both the patient experience and the organizational culture. Baraglia's reflections are essential to keep in view a key dimension that enables us to navigate these times of great epistemological uncertainty without succumbing to what Lola López Mondéjar called the "*cognitive apocalypse*."

To achieve this, we must reconceptualize empathy as an organizational infrastructure, not merely as an individual virtue.

Author for correspondence: daniel.matusevich@hospitalitaliano.org.ar, Matusevich D.

Received: 09/10/25 Accepted: 09/18/2025

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.51987/revhospitalbares.v45i3.1300>

How to cite: Eymann A, Matusevich D. Empathy in an Age of Mechanization. Rev. Hosp. Ital. B.Aires. 2025;45(3):e0001300