

SCRIPT · STAFF CONVERSATIONS · GOVERNANCE

How to ask about AI *without starting a witch hunt.*

The exact conversation for surfacing unapproved AI use in your office, worded so people tell you the truth instead of hiding it.

WHAT THIS IS

A word-for-word script (plus the reasoning behind each line) for a 15-minute staff meeting that surfaces what AI tools are already in use in your practice, with a protected good-faith reporting and cooperative-disclosure framing that makes honesty safe.

HOW TO USE IT

Schedule a normal staff meeting. Announce the topic in advance using the wording in Step 1 so staff understand the purpose and are not surprised by the discussion. Run the script. Route what you learn into your Approved AI Tools List and AI Policy Starter, both in this library.

Why protected disclosure first

A December 2025 survey of 518 healthcare professionals by Wolters Kluwer Health found that 40% had encountered unauthorized AI tools in the workplace but didn't use them, and nearly 17% reported using unapproved tools themselves.

Because that is a self-reported national sample, it cannot tell you what is true in your building, but it is enough to justify asking rather than assuming no unapproved use exists. The question is whether the wording makes truth-telling safe or dangerous. Punish the first honest answer and it will be the last one you get.

Step 1. The announcement (send two days before)

"At Thursday's huddle I want to talk about AI tools, what we're already using anywhere in the office, and what we want to use. No one will be disciplined merely for participating honestly in this review. I haven't decided anything. I want to know what's real before we write any rules."

Step 2. The opening (say it, then stop talking)

"Here's my starting assumption: some of us are already using AI somewhere in our work. Maybe for drafting a message, maybe for figuring out a denial letter, maybe on a personal phone. Nationally, in one survey, almost one in five healthcare workers said they'd used tools that weren't approved. If that's true here, I want to know because some of those tools might be genuinely useful, and we should get them approved and safe instead of hidden."

"Here is the deal: the purpose of this meeting is fact-finding and reducing risk, not punishing anyone for raising a concern. No one will be disciplined just for making a truthful, good-faith disclosure today or privately this week. Coming forward is safe. I can't promise there are never consequences for the underlying conduct, we handle that case by case under our existing policies, considering things like intent, whether it kept happening, and cooperation. But making a truthful, good-faith disclosure will not, by itself, be the reason you are disciplined. What I can't work with is anything that stays hidden after we've built the approved list together."

Step 3. The four questions

- "What tools have you used or seen used here, even once?" (Write every answer down without commentary. Your face is the policy right now.)
- "What were you trying to get done when you reached for it?" (The task list is your real gold: it is the map of where your workflows are failing your team.)
- "Did anything patient-related ever go into one of them, even names or partial details?" (Ask it flat and calm. You need this answer for your own risk assessment. React with gratitude, not alarm, or you will never hear a true answer again.)
- "If you could wave a wand, what would you want AI to take off your plate?" (Ends the meeting forward-looking, and tells you what to vet first.)

What not to say

- Do not say "who authorized this?" Nobody did. That is the point of the meeting.
- Do not name or look at a specific person while asking question three.
- Do not promise "we'll approve everything." You won't. Promise a fast, honest review.
- Do not end without a date: "Approved list published by [DATE]. Until then, nothing patient-related goes into anything new."

Step 4. After the meeting

- Same week: write down every tool named, into the Approved AI Tools List template, status "under review."
- If PHI may have entered an unapproved tool: contact your attorney or compliance advisor about assessment obligations. Do it calmly and promptly. This is why you asked.
- Within two weeks: publish the first approved list, even if it is short. A fast, honest "not yet" beats a slow silence.
- Adopt the written policy (AI Policy Starter in this library) at a follow-up meeting, with signatures.

The one-on-one variant

"You know the tools better than most people here. Before we write rules, I want your read: what's actually being used, and what should we look at

first? A truthful, good-faith disclosure won't itself be the reason anyone is disciplined. I can't promise an outcome before we know the facts, but cooperating will count in your favor."

Use it with your most tech-forward staff member a day before the group meeting. They will likely surface issues staff are less willing to raise first in a group, and they become an ally in the room instead of a defendant.

SOURCES · CHECK OUR WORK

Wolters Kluwer Health / CITE Research. Survey of 518 healthcare professionals, Dec 2025. Press release: wolterskluwer.com/en/news/wolters-kluwer-survey-finds-broad-presence-of-unsanctioned-ai-tools-in-hospitals-and-health-systems

Key findings: wolterskluwer.com/en/solutions/uptodate/ai-clinical-decision-support/shadow-ai-report/key-findings

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