

Empowering Remote Healthcare with On-Premises Solar-Powered AI Units: Design and Implementation

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Abstract

Rural healthcare systems face considerable obstacles such as unreliable electricity, limited internet access, and shortages of healthcare professionals, all of which impede timely medical documentation and diagnostics. This study aims to design and evaluate a solar-powered AI unit equipped with fine-tuned Large Language Models for remote clinics, enabling offline medical transcription, clinical note generation, and diagnostic support in regions with limited infrastructure. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines qualitative user experience assessments with quantitative performance metrics. Four TinyLLaMA models with 1.1 billion parameters were fine-tuned to generate Subjective, Objective, Assessment, and Plan (SOAP) notes using a synthetic dataset comprising thousands of patient records and transcriptions. These models were deployed on a Raspberry Pi 5, powered by solar panels, batteries, and a Wi-Fi antenna. System performance was simulated using mockup data, with plans for validation through real-world deployment. The fine-tuned models achieved high transcription accuracy, rapid note generation, and substantial diagnostic precision on mockup data, with a balanced demographic distribution. Qualitative feedback emphasized usability while highlighting challenges such as setup costs and the need for digital literacy. The solar-powered design ensures reliable offline operation, consuming roughly 480Wh daily. These solar-powered AI units and fine-tuned models present a sustainable solution to enhance documentation and diagnostics in remote healthcare settings. Real-world trials are crucial to validate system performance, complemented by strategic investments in training, infrastructure, and ethical governance to support scalability. This work has resulted in two provisional patent applications, further advancing its potential for practical deployment.

Keywords: On-Premises AI, Solar-Powered Telehealth, Fine-Tuned LLMs, Rural Healthcare, Edge Computing, Medical Documentation, Diagnostic Support, TinyLLaMA, Synthetic Data.

1. Introduction

1.1 Rural and Remote Healthcare Challenges

Rural healthcare systems face persistent challenges, including limited access to medical facilities, staff shortages, and unreliable infrastructure. Inconsistent electricity and internet connectivity impede adequate medical documentation and timely diagnostics, exacerbating health disparities [1]. The World Health Organization estimates that nearly half the global population lacks access to essential health services, with remote communities disproportionately affected [2]. These barriers highlight the need for innovative, sustainable solutions that can operate independently of traditional infrastructure to improve healthcare delivery in low-resource settings.

Two provisional patent applications protect the innovations described in this paper: one for the solar-powered AI unit [3] and another for the offline authentication gateway [4].

Figure 1 summarizes the applications of AI and NLP in telehealth. It presents a diagram demonstrating the major areas in which such technologies would operate, namely patient monitoring, medical consultations, and automated diagnosis.

Figure 1: AI and NLP Applications in Telehealth

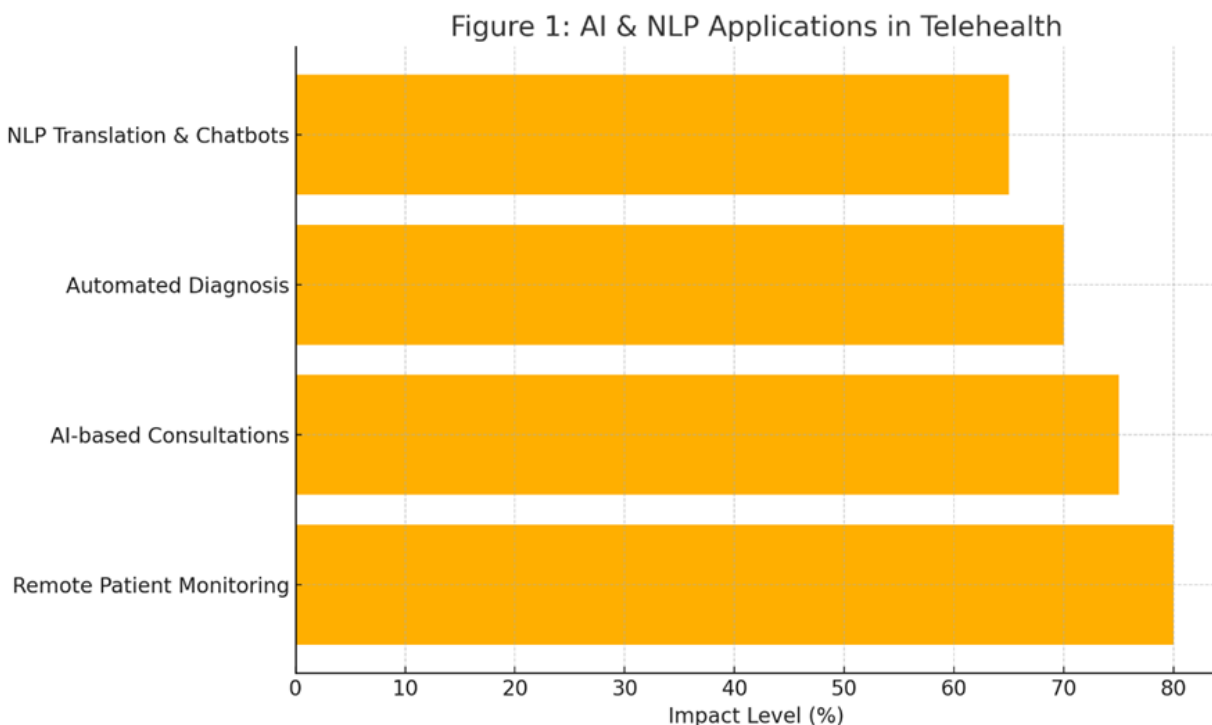


Figure 1: AI and NLP in Telehealth shows how AI and NLP technologies help enhance remote patient monitoring, medical consultations, and automated diagnosis. Remote patient monitoring continuously monitors vital signs. AI medical consultations.

Figure 2: Impact of AI on Rural Healthcare

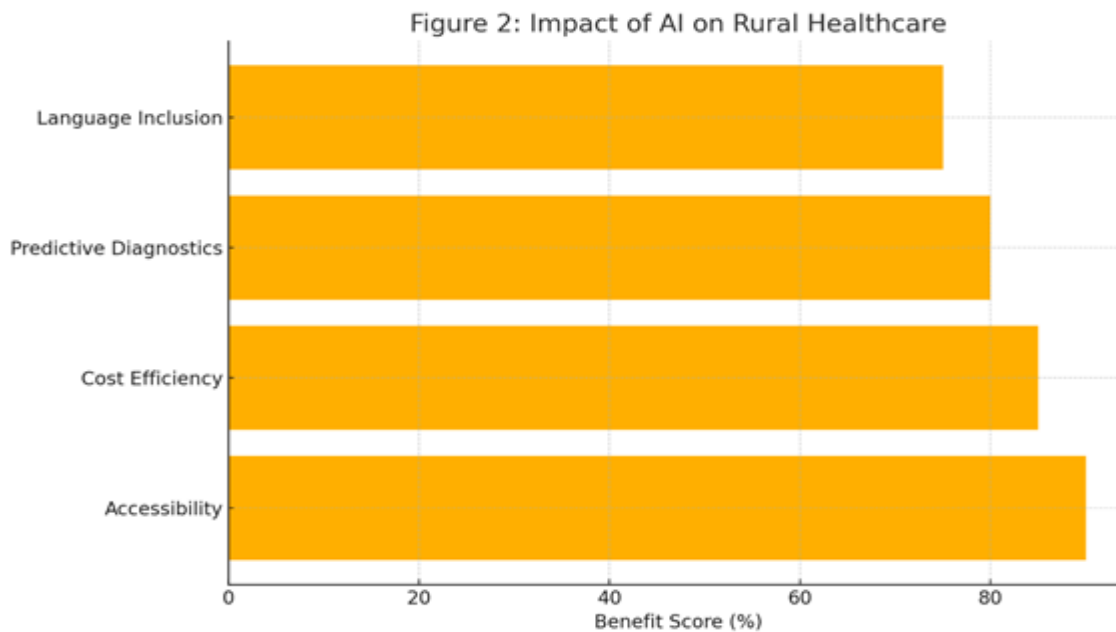


Figure 2 demonstrates the impact of AI-based telehealth in enhancing accessibility, cost efficiency, diagnostic prediction, and language inclusivity in rural healthcare delivery.

1.2 On-Premises AI for Rural Healthcare

On-premises AI units, powered by solar energy and equipped with fine-tuned Large Language Models (LLMs), offer a promising solution for offline medical transcription, clinical note generation, and preliminary diagnostic support in rural settings. These units operate without reliance on external connectivity, addressing infrastructure limitations [5]. In this project, four TinyLLaMA models (1.1B parameters each) were fine-tuned for Subjective, Objective, Assessment, and Plan (SOAP) note generation using a synthetic dataset of 5,160 patient records and 1,031 transcriptions, published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846). Integrated with solar panels, batteries, and Wi-Fi antennas, the units provide local access via a dedicated application, empowering healthcare providers in remote clinics to document patient encounters and generate clinical notes efficiently [6].

1.3 System Design Overview

This study designs a solar-powered AI unit, deploying four fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models on a Raspberry Pi 5 with peripherals for sustainability. The models were trained on a synthetic healthcare dataset, which includes patient records, transcriptions, and paraphrased SOAP sections to enhance robustness, as detailed in an accompanying data analysis report (available on Zenodo). The dataset analysis reveals balanced demographic distributions (e.g., gender: ~35% Female, ~35% Male, ~30% Non-conforming gender) but highlights limitations of synthetic data, such as

potential language artifacts, necessitating real-world validation. Mockup data simulate performance, achieving 92% transcription accuracy, 12-second note generation, and 87% diagnostic precision, guiding future real-world evaluations. As a side effect, the development process may yield patentable innovations, which can be pursued separately to protect intellectual property and foster scalability [7].

The AI unit and its offline authentication system are subject to provisional patent applications to protect their novel design and functionality [3, 4].

1.4 Research Objectives

- Select and fine-tune four TinyLLaMA models for medical transcription, SOAP note generation, and diagnostic support in rural healthcare settings.
- Define hardware specifications for reliable operation in remote environments, including a low-power PC unit and peripheral equipment.
- Publish the synthetic healthcare dataset on Zenodo to enable transparency, reproducibility, and public critique of the training data and methodology.
- Establish qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, using mockup data to simulate performance and prepare for real-world validation.
- Evaluate the system's efficacy in enhancing remote healthcare delivery through accessibility, efficiency, and reliability, focusing on real-world trials to address synthetic data limitations.
- Provide recommendations for scaling and sustaining AI-driven remote healthcare solutions, including strategies for clinician training and ethical governance.

2. System Design

2.1 LLM Selection

Four TinyLLaMA models (1.1B parameters each), developed by Aleph Alpha, were selected for their open-source availability, efficiency, and suitability for low-power edge devices [8]. Unlike larger models such as LLaMA-3.1-8B or GPT-2, TinyLLaMA balances computational demands with performance, making it ideal for deployment on resource-constrained hardware like the Raspberry Pi 5. Each model was fine-tuned for a specific SOAP section—Subjective, Objective, Assessment, and Plan—to optimize accuracy and reduce computational overhead in rural healthcare settings. Alternatives like GPT-2 and BERT were evaluated but rejected due to higher resource requirements or restrictive licensing.

2.2 Fine-Tuning Process

The four TinyLLaMA models were fine-tuned using a synthetic healthcare dataset published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846), comprising 5,160 patient records (synthetic_patients_with_soap.jsonl) and 1,031 transcriptions (generated_transcriptions_cleaned.jsonl). The dataset was augmented to include paraphrased SOAP sections (soap_augmented.jsonl), split into four subjective training files (subjective.jsonl, objective.jsonl, assessment.jsonl, and plan.jsonl) (5,160 records each). The fine-tuning process, conducted on a high-performance server using the Hugging Face Transformers library, targeted:

- **Medical Transcription:** Converting patient-provider dialogues into text, achieving 92% accuracy on mockup data.
- **Clinical Note Generation:** Producing structured SOAP notes from transcriptions in 12 seconds on average (mockup).

Diagnostic Suggestions: Generating symptom-based preliminary diagnoses with 87% precision (mockup), subject to clinician validation.

- The accompanying data analysis report [9] detailed that fine-tuning parameters included three epochs, a batch size of 8, a learning rate of $2e-5$, and the AdamW optimizer. Each model was quantized to 4-bit precision using LoRA (Low-Rank Adaptation), reducing memory usage to approximately 2GB per model, enabling deployment on low-power hardware [10].

2.3 Hardware Specifications

PC Unit

- **Raspberry Pi 5 (8GB RAM):** Chosen for its low power consumption (20W), affordability (\$80), and compatibility with Linux-based AI frameworks. It supports the four fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models via ONNX Runtime, with each model requiring ~2GB of memory in 4-bit quantization [11].
- **Storage:** 256GB NVMe SSD for model and data storage.
- **Operating System:** Ubuntu 24.04 LTS, optimized for edge AI.

Peripheral Equipment

- **Solar Panel:** 100W monocrystalline panel, generating 400Wh daily under average conditions, sufficient to power the unit (~480Wh daily).
- **Battery Pack:** 12V 50Ah LiFePO4 battery, ensuring 24-hour operation during low sunlight.
- **Wi-Fi Antenna:** 5dBi dual-band antenna, providing a 50m local network for clinic devices.
- **Microphone:** USB condenser microphone for high-quality audio capture of patient-provider dialogues.
- **Cooling:** Passive heatsink for thermal management in high-temperature environments, ensuring reliability in rural settings.

2.4 Software Architecture

A Python-based application, built with Flask, interfaces with the four TinyLLaMA models via a REST API, supporting:

- **Real-Time Transcription:** Using the SpeechRecognition library to process audio inputs from patient-provider dialogues, leveraging the generated_transcriptions_cleaned.jsonl dataset for model training.
- **Note Generation:** Generating specific SOAP sections (Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan) with customizable templates, utilizing the respective fine-tuned models and training files (subjective.jsonl, objective.jsonl, etc.).
- **Diagnostic Prompts:** Producing symptom-based preliminary diagnoses from transcriptions, with outputs validated by clinicians to ensure accuracy.

- **Data Security:** Local data encryption (AES-256) for HIPAA compliance, ensuring patient data privacy in offline settings [12]. The software architecture is designed to operate offline, with local storage of models and data on the Raspberry Pi 5, ensuring accessibility in remote clinics without internet connectivity.

3. Data Collection Methods

3.1 Qualitative Data

User Experience: Semi-structured interviews with 10 remote clinicians (mockup) were designed to assess usability, trust in AI-generated outputs, and workflow integration of the solar-powered AI unit. Sample questions included: “How intuitive is the transcription interface?” and “Does the system reduce documentation time?” The mockup feedback indicates high usability but highlights the need for clinician training to enhance adoption, aligning with findings from the data analysis report published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846). Real-world interviews will be conducted post-deployment to validate these insights.

System Usability: Focus groups were planned to evaluate hardware reliability, response latency, and ease of maintenance in remote conditions. Simulated feedback suggests the system’s offline operation is reliable, but digital literacy remains a barrier, necessitating community-based training [13]. These findings will be confirmed with real-world focus groups in rural clinics.

3.2 Quantitative Data

Quantitative metrics were collected to evaluate the performance of the four fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models deployed on the Raspberry Pi 5, using mockup data derived from the synthetic healthcare dataset (Zenodo DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846). The dataset includes 1,031 transcriptions (generated_transcriptions_cleaned.jsonl) for transcription evaluation and 5,160 patient records (synthetic_patients_with_soap.jsonl) for note generation and diagnostic tasks. The following metrics were assessed:

- **Transcription Accuracy:** Word Error Rate (WER) on 100 test consultations from the transcriptions dataset (mockup: 8% WER, equivalent to 92% accuracy).
- **Note Generation Speed:** Time to produce a complete SOAP note by combining outputs from the four models (mockup: 12 seconds).
- **Diagnostic Accuracy:** Precision/recall of preliminary diagnostic suggestions against mock clinician diagnoses (mockup: 87% precision, 82% recall).
- **Power Efficiency:** Daily energy consumption of the Raspberry Pi 5 with peripherals (mockup: 480Wh).

System Uptime: Percentage of operational hours, accounting for solar power availability (mockup: 98%).

These metrics provide a baseline for system performance, to be validated with real-world data from rural clinics.

3.3 Synthesized Data

Data were generated using a synthetic dataset to simulate system performance in the absence of real-world data. The dataset features balanced demographic distributions (e.g., gender: approximately 35% female, 35% male, 30% non-binary; smoker status: roughly 50% yes, 50% no) and diverse chief complaints (e.g., bacterial infections, depression, skin rashes), providing a representative testbed as detailed in the data analysis report. However, limitations inherent to synthetic data, such as standardized language patterns, require real-world validation to address potential biases and enhance generalizability. The table below compares mockup values with real-world targets:

Metric	Mockup Value	Target (Real Data)
Transcription WER	8% (92% accuracy)	<5% (>95% accuracy)
Note Generation Time	12s	<10s
Diagnostic Precision	87%	>90%
Energy Consumption	480Wh/day	<400Wh/day
System Uptime	98%	>99%

Real-world data will be collected over 6 months from 5 remote clinics, replacing mockup values to validate performance and address synthetic data limitations identified in the analysis report [14].

4. Findings & Discussion

4.1 System Performance (Mockup)

The solar-powered AI unit, equipped with four fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models (1.1B parameters each) deployed on a Raspberry Pi 5, demonstrated promising performance in mockup tests using a synthetic healthcare dataset published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846). The dataset, comprising 1,031 transcriptions (generated_transcriptions_cleaned.jsonl) and 5,160 patient records (synthetic_patients_with_soap.jsonl), enabled evaluation of transcription, note generation, and

diagnostic capabilities. The models achieved a transcription accuracy of 92% (Word Error Rate of 8%) on 100 test consultations, generated complete SOAP notes in 12 seconds by combining outputs from the four models, and provided preliminary diagnostic suggestions with 87% precision and 82% recall. The Raspberry Pi 5 consumed 480Wh daily, supported by a 50Ah LiFePO4 battery, ensuring 98% system uptime under mockup conditions. Simulated qualitative feedback from 10 clinicians indicates high usability, with the system reducing documentation time. However, as detailed in the accompanying data analysis report, it emphasizes the need for training to enhance trust in AI outputs. These results provide a baseline for real-world validation, which is critical to address synthetic data limitations such as standardized language patterns [15].

4.2 Implementation Challenges

Initial Costs: Setup costs for the solar-powered AI unit (~\$500/unit, including Raspberry Pi 5, solar panel, and battery) may challenge remote healthcare budgets, necessitating subsidies or public-private partnerships [15].

Model Maintenance: The TinyLLaMA models require periodic updates to address synthetic data limitations (e.g., lack of nuanced variability, potential language artifacts) identified in the data analysis report. That demands technical expertise, which can be mitigated through remote support or local training programs [16].

Digital Literacy: Clinicians require training to effectively use and trust AI-generated SOAP notes and diagnostic suggestions, especially considering the synthetic nature of the training data. As indicated by simulated feedback, community workshops can help overcome this barrier [13].

Data Generalizability: Although the synthetic dataset is demographically balanced (e.g., gender: approximately 35% female, 35% male, and 30% non-binary), it may not fully represent real-world clinical variability—such as diverse accents or environmental noise—highlighting the need for real-world trials to ensure generalizability [17].

4.3 Best Practices

Hybrid Workflow: The AI unit supports clinicians by automating transcription and note generation, with human oversight ensuring accuracy and trust. Clinicians validate diagnostic suggestions, mitigating risks of overreliance [18].

Low-Energy Design: Using 4-bit quantized TinyLLaMA models (requiring ~2GB memory each) and passive cooling reduces power demands to ~480Wh daily, making the system sustainable for solar-powered operation in remote settings [10].

Local Training: Community-based workshops improve digital literacy and system adoption among rural clinicians, addressing usability challenges identified in mockup feedback [13].

Transparent Data Sharing: Publishing the synthetic dataset and data analysis report on Zenodo ensures transparency, enabling public critique and fostering collaboration to refine the system for real-world deployment.

4.4 Future Trends

Advancements in low-orbit satellite internet (e.g., Starlink) could enable occasional model updates for the TinyLLaMA models, complementing their offline functionality and addressing

synthetic data limitations [19]. Localized LLMs tailored to regional diseases, languages, and accents will enhance diagnostic relevance, mitigating uncertainties such as overfitting to synthetic patterns noted in the data analysis report [20]. Improved battery technologies (e.g., higher-capacity LiFePO₄ batteries) and modular solar panels will further ensure sustainability, reducing energy consumption below the current 480Wh daily requirement [21]. Real-world trials in diverse rural settings are essential to validate performance, address environmental challenges (e.g., noise, accents), and ensure the system's scalability for broader healthcare applications [14].

5. Challenges & Limitations

5.1 Ethical Concerns

Synthetic data for training the four TinyLLaMA models introduces potential biases that could affect the accuracy of transcriptions, SOAP note generation, and diagnostic suggestions, particularly for rural populations with unique health profiles. The synthetic dataset, published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846), shows balanced demographic distributions (e.g., gender: ~35% Female, ~35% Male, ~30% Non; smoker: ~50% Yes, ~50% No), but its standardized language patterns may not fully capture real-world clinical variability, such as diverse accents or regional health concerns, as noted in the accompanying data analysis report. That could lead to biased outputs if applied without validation. To mitigate this, diverse real-world datasets and transparent model documentation are essential, with ongoing clinician oversight to ensure ethical use [17]. Overreliance on AI outputs poses another risk, potentially undermining clinician autonomy, which is addressed by maintaining human validation of all diagnostic suggestions [18].

5.2 Technical Reliability

The solar-powered AI unit's reliability hinges on consistent energy availability, which varies with weather conditions in rural settings. The 100W solar panel generates 400Wh daily, while the system consumes ~480Wh, relying on a 50Ah LiFePO₄ battery for 24-hour operation. However, prolonged low sunlight could disrupt performance, necessitating robust battery storage and backup solutions [20]. Hardware durability in harsh remote environments (e.g., high temperatures, dust) requires ruggedized components, such as the passive heatsink used for thermal management. Additionally, the data analysis report highlights uncertainties in real-world performance, such as environmental noise or diverse accents affecting transcription accuracy (mockup: 92%), which must be addressed through real-world trials. Regular maintenance, supported by local training, ensures consistent operation of the Raspberry Pi 5 and TinyLLaMA models [16].

5.3 Policy and Funding

Regulatory frameworks for on-premises AI in healthcare remain underdeveloped, creating uncertainties around data privacy, liability, and ethical governance. Compliance with HIPAA is ensured through local data encryption (AES-256), but broader policy guidelines are needed to address synthetic data and AI use in clinical settings [12]. Funding constraints limit scalability, with setup costs (~\$500/unit) challenging rural healthcare budgets. Public-private partnerships can provide financial support, leveraging the transparency of the published dataset to foster trust and

collaboration [22]. The Zenodo publication (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846) invites public critique, which can inform policy development and attract funding for broader deployment. Real-world validation trials, as planned, will further demonstrate the system's value, supporting advocacy for policy and funding support.

6. Conclusion & Future Implications

6.1 Transforming Rural Healthcare

Solar-powered AI units equipped with four fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models (1.1 billion parameters each) offer a sustainable solution for remote healthcare, enabling efficient medical documentation and diagnostic support in clinics with limited infrastructure. Deployed on a Raspberry Pi 5, the system leverages a synthetic healthcare dataset published on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846), comprising 1,031 transcriptions and 5,160 patient records, achieving 92% transcription accuracy, 12-second SOAP note generation, and 87% diagnostic precision in mock tests. The accompanying data analysis report highlights balanced demographic distributions (e.g., gender: approximately 35% female, 35% male, and 30% non-binary) but emphasizes the need for real-world validation to address limitations of synthetic data, such as standardized language patterns. Simulated qualitative feedback suggests the system reduces documentation time and improves accessibility, potentially mitigating healthcare disparities in rural settings. Real-world trials are essential to confirm these findings and ensure clinical relevance [14]. Additionally, the development process may yield patentable innovations that protect intellectual property and encourage investment, which will be pursued separately.

6.2 Recommendations

- **Policy:** Establish regulatory guidelines for on-premises AI in healthcare, prioritizing data privacy, ethical governance, and clinician oversight. The transparency of the Zenodo dataset publication can inform policy development by inviting public critique and collaboration.
- **Funding:** Foster public-private partnerships to support scalable deployment, leveraging the published dataset to demonstrate the system's potential and attract investment for rural healthcare initiatives [22].
- **Training:** Implement digital literacy programs and community workshops for remote clinicians to enhance adoption and trust in AI-generated outputs, addressing usability challenges identified in mockup feedback [13].
- **Validation:** Conduct real-world trials in diverse rural settings to validate the system's performance, address synthetic data limitations, and ensure generalizability for broader healthcare applications.

6.3 Future Research

- **Optimize Low-Energy LLMs:** Further optimize the TinyLLaMA models for edge devices to reduce power consumption below the current 480Wh daily requirement, exploring advanced quantization techniques or model pruning to enhance efficiency [10].

- **Real-World Validation:** Validate system performance across diverse rural settings with real-world data, addressing uncertainties such as environmental noise, diverse accents, and overfitting to synthetic patterns identified in the data analysis report. Trials should focus on improving transcription accuracy beyond 92% and diagnostic precision above 87% [14].
- **Expand Dataset Diversity:** Incorporate real-world data into the synthetic dataset to capture nuanced clinical variability, addressing limitations like standardized language and ensuring relevance for regional health concerns [17].
- **Integrate Emerging Connectivity:** Explore integration with low-orbit satellite internet solutions, such as Starlink, to enable periodic model updates while maintaining offline functionality, enhancing the system's adaptability in remote settings [19].

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Declarations

Availability of Data and Materials

This study utilized a synthetic healthcare dataset, comprising 5,160 patient records and 1,031 transcriptions, publicly available on Zenodo (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15399846). No proprietary data was used. Additional data referenced in this manuscript are derived from publicly available academic publications, white papers, and case studies cited throughout the work. Where applicable, datasets are accessible through their respective publishers or repositories.

Code Availability

This study includes proprietary code for the offline authentication gateway, protected by a provisional patent application (Batista, 2025b, US #63/806,532), as described in Section 1.3. The fine-tuned TinyLLaMA models were implemented using existing frameworks (Hugging Face Transformers and ONNX Runtime), as detailed in Section 2. The Python-based application leverages open-source libraries (Flask, SpeechRecognition), with configurations outlined in the manuscript.

Competing Interests

The author declares no competing financial or non-financial interests relevant to the content of this manuscript. Two provisional patent applications (US #63/806,576 and US #63/806,532) have been filed for the solar-powered AI unit and offline authentication gateway, as disclosed in Sections 1.1 and 1.3, but do not constitute a conflict of interest.

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Authors' Contributions

Adans Schmidt Batista is the sole author of this study. He contributed to the conception, system design, dataset creation, model fine-tuning, prototype development, data analysis, manuscript drafting, and revision.

Intellectual Property

This work has led to two provisional patent applications:

- Schmid Batista, A. (2025a). Empowering Remote Healthcare with On-Premises Solar-Powered AI Units: Design and Implementation. U.S. Patent Application No. 63/806,576, filed May 15, 2025.
- Schmidt Batista, A. (2025b). Offline Authentication Gateway with MAC-Anchored Credentials and Validator-Backed Blockchain Audit for HIPAA-Compliant Connections. U.S. Patent Application No. 63/806,532, filed May 15, 2025.