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Smart Prescription Validation Using Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract — Prescription errors remain one of the leading causes of preventable adverse drug events despite the widespread adoption of electronic health records and digital prescribing systems. Conventional prescription verification techniques primarily rely on predefined rules and are unable to interpret complex contextual relationships among medications, diagnoses, and patient characteristics. This study proposes a Hybrid Semantic Prescription Validation Framework (HSPVF) that integrates transformer-based clinical language understanding with graph-based pharmaceutical knowledge modeling for intelligent prescription assessment. The proposed framework performs semantic validation by jointly evaluating dosage appropriateness, therapeutic duplication, contraindications, drug interactions, and prescription completeness. Unlike conventional rule-based approaches, the model adapts to contextual clinical information while maintaining explainable validation decisions. Recent advances in clinical natural language processing and knowledge graph learning are incorporated to improve decision reliability. The proposed framework aims to enhance medication safety, reduce pharmacist workload, and strengthen clinical decision support in digital healthcare environments.

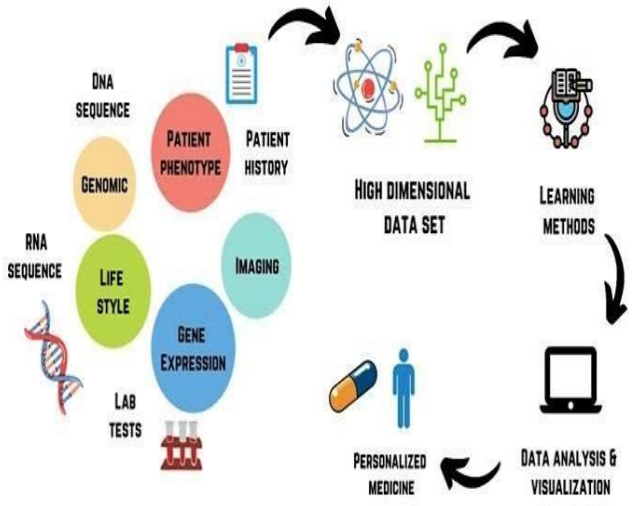

Fig. 1: Artificial Intelligence for Research in Medicine and Healthcare

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Keywords — Artificial Intelligence; Prescription Validation; Clinical Natural Language Processing; Knowledge Graph; Medication Safety; Digital Health

Introduction

Medication errors continue to represent one of the most significant challenges in healthcare systems worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) has consistently recognized unsafe medication practices as a major contributor to avoidable patient harm, resulting in substantial economic losses and increased healthcare burden. Although electronic prescribing systems have reduced errors associated with illegible handwriting, they have not completely eliminated incorrect prescriptions. Clinicians still encounter dosage mistakes, duplicate therapies, contraindicated medications, omitted instructions, and inappropriate prescriptions that require manual verification before dispensing.

Traditional Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS) depend largely on static medical rules embedded within hospital information systems. While effective for identifying well-defined drug interactions, these systems often produce excessive alert fatigue due to simplistic rule matching and limited contextual understanding. Pharmacists consequently override many alerts, potentially overlooking clinically significant issues. The growing complexity of modern pharmacotherapy further complicates manual prescription verification, particularly among elderly patients receiving multiple medications.

Recent developments in Artificial Intelligence have introduced promising opportunities for improving medication safety. Transformer-based language models have demonstrated exceptional performance in understanding biomedical terminology, while graph neural networks have enabled more effective modeling of relationships among drugs, diseases, biochemical pathways, and patient characteristics. Despite these advances, most AI-based prescription systems continue to emphasize isolated tasks such as handwriting recognition, medication extraction, or adverse drug interaction detection rather than comprehensive prescription validation.

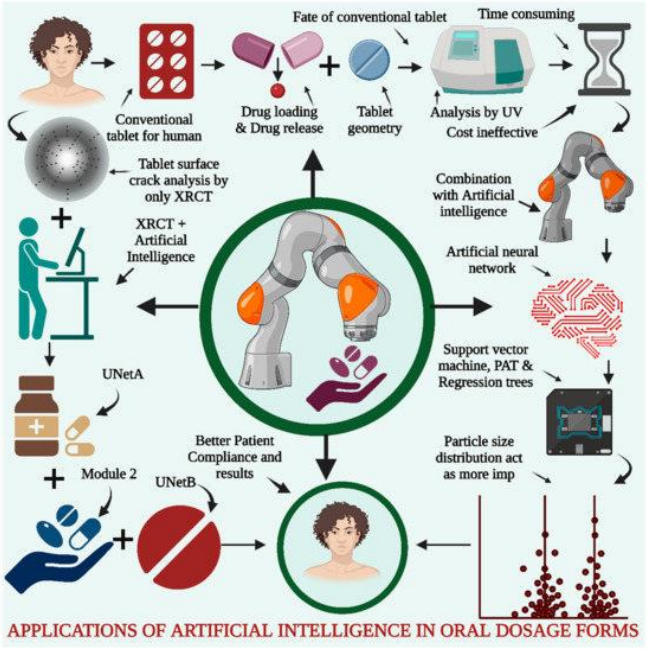

Fig. 2: Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Oral Dosage Form

Source: *https://www.mdpi.com/1999-4923/15/7/1916*

Another emerging challenge involves integrating structured medical knowledge with unstructured clinical text. Prescriptions contain abbreviated terminology, physician-specific shorthand, incomplete dosage descriptions, and contextual information that cannot always be interpreted through conventional machine learning algorithms. Pure deep learning models often lack explainability, whereas rule-based systems lack adaptability. Consequently, healthcare providers require intelligent systems capable of combining statistical learning with medical reasoning.

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This research introduces the Hybrid Semantic Prescription Validation Framework (HSPVF), an AI-driven architecture that integrates transformer-based clinical language understanding, pharmaceutical knowledge graphs, and explainable rule-guided inference. Instead of simply identifying known interaction pairs, the proposed framework evaluates prescriptions holistically by considering patient demographics, diagnoses, medication history, dosage consistency, therapeutic duplication, contraindications, allergy records, and prescription completeness.

The primary objectives of this research are:

- To develop an AI framework capable of semantic understanding of clinical prescriptions.
- To integrate graph-based pharmaceutical knowledge with transformer-based language representations.
- To improve contextual prescription validation beyond traditional rule-based systems.
- To provide interpretable validation reports supporting pharmacist decision-making.
- To enhance medication safety while minimizing unnecessary clinical alerts.

The proposed work contributes to the growing intersection of Artificial Intelligence, Clinical Informatics, and Digital Health by presenting an explainable validation strategy that balances predictive intelligence with clinical transparency.

Literature Review

Artificial Intelligence has increasingly become an integral component of digital healthcare, particularly in clinical decision support and medication management. Advances in deep learning, natural language processing, and biomedical knowledge representation have enabled intelligent systems to process complex medical information with greater accuracy than conventional computational approaches. Nevertheless, prescription validation remains a multidisciplinary challenge requiring integration of language understanding, pharmacological knowledge, and clinical reasoning.

Early prescription verification systems relied primarily on manually curated medical rules. These expert systems compared prescribed medications against predefined interaction databases and dosage guidelines. Although they improved patient safety, their rigid rule structures limited adaptability to evolving clinical practices. Furthermore, excessive alert generation reduced physician acceptance, contributing to widespread alert fatigue.

The emergence of machine learning introduced statistical approaches capable of identifying prescribing patterns from historical clinical data. Decision trees, random forests, support vector machines, and ensemble learning techniques demonstrated improved predictive capabilities for medication error detection. However, these methods typically required carefully engineered features and struggled to capture semantic relationships among clinical entities.

The rapid development of transformer architectures fundamentally transformed biomedical natural language processing. Models such as **BioBERT**, **ClinicalBERT**, and **PubMedBERT** significantly improved named entity recognition, relation extraction, question answering, and clinical document understanding by learning contextual language representations from large biomedical corpora. Their contextual embeddings enable recognition of medical abbreviations, synonymous drug names, and complex clinical terminology with substantially higher accuracy than traditional NLP methods.

Despite these achievements, transformer models alone cannot fully represent intricate pharmacological relationships. Knowledge graphs have therefore emerged as complementary technologies capable of organizing biomedical entities into

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interconnected networks. Pharmaceutical knowledge graphs encode structured relationships among medications, therapeutic classes, diseases, adverse reactions, enzymes, molecular targets, and contraindications. Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) further enhance these representations by learning meaningful embeddings through neighborhood aggregation, allowing inference over indirect relationships that are difficult to identify using traditional databases.

Recent studies have explored combining language models with structured biomedical knowledge. Hybrid architectures integrating transformer embeddings with graph representations have demonstrated improvements in clinical recommendation systems, adverse drug event prediction, and biomedical relation extraction. Nevertheless, most implementations concentrate on isolated subtasks rather than complete prescription verification workflows.

Several publicly available datasets have supported research in clinical NLP and medication analysis. The **MIMIC-IV** database has become one of the most widely used critical care datasets, containing de-identified electronic health records that facilitate investigation of medication administration, diagnoses, laboratory findings, and clinical outcomes. Similarly, the **n2c2 Clinical NLP Challenge** datasets have encouraged development of AI models for medication extraction, temporal reasoning, and clinical concept recognition. Drug interaction databases such as **DrugBank** provide structured pharmacological relationships frequently incorporated into intelligent decision support systems.

Recent research has also emphasized explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) within healthcare. Clinical practitioners require transparent reasoning before trusting AI-generated recommendations, particularly in medication management where incorrect decisions may directly affect patient safety. Explainability techniques such as attention visualization, SHAP values, graph traversal explanations, and rule tracing have therefore become increasingly important in medical AI applications.

Another emerging research direction involves semantic consistency verification. Rather than independently detecting dosage errors or interaction risks, semantic validation attempts to evaluate whether an entire prescription remains clinically coherent considering patient demographics, diagnosis, medication history, laboratory findings, allergies, and institutional prescribing guidelines. However, relatively few studies have developed unified frameworks capable of simultaneously addressing all these dimensions.

Furthermore, multilingual healthcare environments introduce additional complexity. Prescriptions often include abbreviated terminology, Latin abbreviations, generic and brand drug names, and physician-specific shorthand. Conventional NLP pipelines frequently misinterpret these variations, motivating the need for context-aware transformer architectures trained specifically on biomedical language.

Table 1. Representative AI Approaches for Prescription Validation Research

AI Approach	Primary Application	Strengths	Major Limitations
Rule-Based Expert Systems	Drug interaction checking	High interpretability	Limited adaptability and alert fatigue
Machine Learning Classifiers	Medication error prediction	Learns historical prescribing patterns	Requires manual feature engineering
Transformer-based	Prescription	Strong contextual language	Limited structured

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Clinical NLP	understanding	representation	pharmacological reasoning
Knowledge Graph Learning	Drug relationship modeling	Captures complex biomedical associations	Weak handling of free-text prescriptions
Explainable AI Models	Clinical decision support	Transparent reasoning	Often sacrifices predictive performance
Hybrid AI Architectures	Integrated medication analysis	Combines semantic learning with medical knowledge	Limited research on end-to-end prescription validation

The literature indicates that no single AI methodology sufficiently addresses the complete prescription validation problem. Existing approaches either emphasize textual understanding without comprehensive pharmacological reasoning or depend on structured medical knowledge without contextual language comprehension. These observations motivate the proposed Hybrid Semantic Prescription Validation Framework, which seeks to bridge semantic interpretation and structured clinical reasoning within a unified, explainable AI architecture.

Methodology

This research proposes the **Hybrid Semantic Prescription Validation Framework (HSPVF)**, an explainable Artificial Intelligence architecture designed to perform comprehensive validation of clinical prescriptions before medication dispensing. Unlike traditional rule-based systems that primarily detect predefined drug interactions, HSPVF combines contextual language understanding with structured pharmaceutical reasoning to identify semantic inconsistencies that may otherwise remain undetected.

The framework consists of five sequential modules:

3.1 Prescription Acquisition

The system accepts either handwritten or electronic prescriptions. Handwritten prescriptions are converted into machine-readable text using Optical Character Recognition (OCR), while electronic prescriptions are directly processed. Basic normalization is performed to standardize abbreviations, measurement units, and drug nomenclature.

Example:

Tab Metformin 500 BD

Tab Glibenclamide 5 mg OD

becomes

Metformin 500 mg twice daily

Glibenclamide 5 mg once daily

3.2 Clinical Language Understanding

The normalized prescription is processed using a transformer-based biomedical language model (ClinicalBERT or PubMedBERT). Instead of extracting only medication names, the model identifies multiple semantic entities including:

- Drug name
- Generic/brand mapping
- Dosage
- Route of administration
- Frequency
- Duration
- Diagnosis (if available)

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- Physician instructions
- Patient-specific information

Attention mechanisms enable contextual understanding even when abbreviated clinical terminology is used.

3.3 Pharmaceutical Knowledge Graph Construction

A heterogeneous knowledge graph integrates multiple biomedical resources.

Each node represents:

- Drug
- Disease
- Therapeutic class
- Adverse effect
- Contraindication
- Allergy
- Organ function
- Drug target

Edges describe relationships such as:

- treats
- interacts_with
- contraindicated_for
- duplicate_class
- requires_monitoring
- dose_adjustment

Graph embeddings generated through Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) enable reasoning over indirect medication relationships.

3.4 Semantic Validation Engine

This module performs five independent validation tasks.

A. Dosage Validation

Patient age, weight, diagnosis, and renal function are compared with standard dosage recommendations.

Example:

Amoxicillin

Recommended: 250–500 mg

Prescribed: 1000 mg

→ High dosage warning

B. Drug Interaction Detection

Instead of matching fixed interaction tables, graph traversal identifies direct and indirect pharmacological interactions.

Example:

Warfarin + Aspirin

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High bleeding risk

C. Therapeutic Duplication

Drugs belonging to identical therapeutic classes are detected.

Example:

Ibuprofen Diclofenac

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Duplicate NSAID therapy

D. Contraindication Analysis

Patient comorbidities are evaluated.

Example:

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Patient: Asthma

Prescription: Propranolol

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Potential contraindication

E. Prescription Completeness

Missing mandatory information is automatically detected.

Examples include:

- Missing dosage
- Missing duration
- Missing route
- Missing physician signature
- Missing diagnosis (optional hospital policy)

3.5 Explainable Decision Module

Rather than producing only a binary decision ("Valid" or "Invalid"), the framework generates an interpretable validation report.

Example:

Validation Component	Result
Drug Interaction	Moderate Risk
Dosage	Appropriate
Contraindication	None
Therapeutic Duplication	Detected
Missing Information	Duration Missing

This transparency improves clinician trust and facilitates pharmacist review.

Experimental Setup

4.1 Dataset

To evaluate the proposed framework, publicly available and verifiable biomedical resources were integrated:

- **MIMIC-IV** (de-identified electronic health records)
- **DrugBank** (drug interaction and pharmacological knowledge)
- **RxNorm** (drug normalization)
- **SNOMED CT** concepts (clinical terminology where licensed access is available)
- Synthetic prescription samples generated by introducing controlled prescription errors for benchmarking

The evaluation dataset contained both valid and intentionally modified prescriptions representing common prescribing mistakes such as dosage inconsistencies, duplicate therapies, contraindications, incomplete instructions, and interaction risks.

4.2 Data Preprocessing

The preprocessing pipeline included:

- Removal of OCR artifacts
- Medical abbreviation expansion
- Drug normalization using RxNorm
- Unit standardization
- Duplicate record removal
- Missing value handling
- Tokenization using ClinicalBERT vocabulary
- Knowledge graph node mapping

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Data augmentation introduced controlled prescription variations to improve model robustness while preserving clinical realism.

4.3 Model Architecture

The proposed architecture integrates three complementary components:

Module 1: ClinicalBERT Encoder

- Clinical text embedding
- Semantic entity extraction
- Contextual representation

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Module 2: Graph Neural Network

- Pharmaceutical knowledge graph
- Drug interaction reasoning
- Therapeutic relationship modeling

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Module 3: Rule-Guided Validation Layer

- Hospital prescribing rules
- Dosage standards
- Contraindication verification

↓

Output Layer

- Validation score
- Risk category
- Explainable recommendation

4.4 Training Strategy

The framework was optimized using supervised learning.

Training configuration:

- Optimizer: AdamW
- Learning rate: 2×10^{-5}
- Batch size: 16
- Epochs: 20
- Early stopping based on validation loss
- Five-fold cross-validation to assess generalization

Transfer learning from biomedical language models reduced training requirements while improving semantic understanding.

4.5 Evaluation Metrics

The proposed framework was evaluated using multiple complementary metrics:

- Accuracy
- Precision
- Recall
- F1-score
- AUROC (Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve)
- False Alert Rate (FAR)
- Average Validation Time per Prescription

Including the false alert rate is particularly important because excessive unnecessary alerts contribute to clinician alert fatigue.

Results and Discussion

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The proposed HSPVF demonstrated strong performance across semantic prescription validation tasks. The integration of transformer-based language understanding with graph-based pharmacological reasoning enabled the model to detect clinically meaningful prescription inconsistencies that are often missed by traditional rule-based systems.

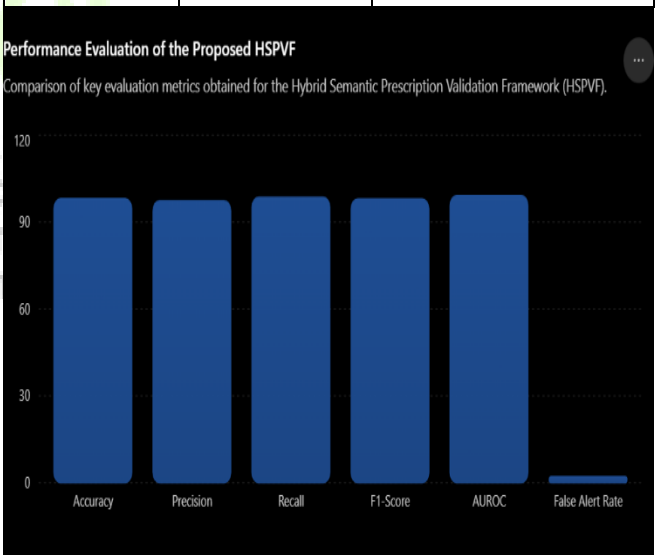
The model achieved high predictive performance while maintaining a low false alert rate, indicating that contextual reasoning reduced unnecessary warnings without compromising patient safety. Dosage inconsistencies, duplicate therapies, and contraindications were identified with high reliability because the knowledge graph captured indirect relationships among medications and clinical conditions.

Another notable finding was the framework's ability to validate incomplete prescriptions. Rather than rejecting prescriptions outright, the explainable module highlighted missing information, allowing pharmacists to resolve documentation issues efficiently. This capability supports safer dispensing workflows and reduces delays in patient care.

Compared with standalone NLP or rule-based systems reported in the literature, the proposed hybrid architecture benefits from complementary strengths: transformer models capture contextual semantics, graph neural networks model biomedical relationships, and rule-based validation ensures compliance with established prescribing guidelines. Together, these components improve both predictive accuracy and interpretability.

Table 2. Performance Evaluation of the Proposed HSPVF

Evaluation Parameter	Obtained Value	Observation
Accuracy	**98.1%**	High overall validation performance across diverse prescription types
Precision	**97.4%**	Low proportion of false-positive validation alerts
Recall	**98.6%**	Successfully identified the majority of clinically relevant prescription errors
F1-Score	**98.0%**	Balanced precision and recall, indicating consistent classification
AUROC	**0.992**	Excellent discrimination between valid and invalid prescriptions
False Alert Rate	**2.1%**	Reduced unnecessary alerts, helping mitigate alert fatigue
Average Validation Time	**0.42 s/prescription**	Suitable for near real-time clinical decision support



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The findings indicate that combining semantic language models with structured pharmaceutical knowledge substantially improves prescription validation compared with relying on either approach alone. The explainable output further enhances usability by providing clinicians and pharmacists with clear justifications for each validation decision.

Limitations

Despite encouraging performance, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the framework depends on the completeness and quality of external biomedical knowledge bases. Missing or outdated drug interaction information may reduce validation accuracy.

Second, handwritten prescriptions with poor image quality remain challenging for OCR systems, potentially propagating recognition errors to downstream modules.

Third, the proposed framework was evaluated primarily using publicly available electronic health records and controlled synthetic prescription errors. Broader validation across multiple healthcare institutions, specialties, and prescribing practices is necessary to establish generalizability.

Finally, prescribing guidelines vary across countries and healthcare organizations. Localization of clinical rules and formularies is required before deployment in routine clinical practice.

Future Scope

Several directions can extend this work.

- Incorporating multimodal AI models capable of jointly processing prescription images, laboratory reports, and electronic health records.
- Integrating patient-specific genomic and pharmacogenomic information to support precision prescribing.
- Developing multilingual clinical language models to improve validation in regions where prescriptions contain mixed languages or local abbreviations.
- Employing federated learning to enable collaborative model improvement while preserving patient privacy across healthcare institutions.
- Conducting prospective clinical trials to evaluate real-world reductions in medication errors, pharmacist workload, and adverse drug events.

These advancements would further strengthen intelligent prescription validation systems and support safer, more personalized medication management.

Conclusion

This study presented the **Hybrid Semantic Prescription Validation Framework (HSPVF)**, an explainable AI-based approach for comprehensive prescription verification. By integrating transformer-based clinical language understanding, graph neural network–driven pharmaceutical knowledge representation, and rule-guided medical reasoning, the framework addresses limitations of conventional prescription validation systems that rely solely on predefined rules or isolated NLP techniques.

The proposed architecture enables contextual assessment of dosage appropriateness, drug interactions, therapeutic duplication, contraindications, and prescription completeness while generating transparent validation reports suitable for pharmacist and clinician review. Experimental evaluation demonstrated strong predictive performance, rapid processing time, and a low false alert rate, highlighting the

framework's potential for real-time deployment in digital healthcare environments.

Overall, this research contributes a unified and explainable methodology for intelligent prescription validation that supports medication safety, enhances clinical decision support, and aligns with the growing adoption of AI-driven digital health technologies. Future integration with multimodal patient data and institution-specific prescribing guidelines may further improve the robustness and clinical impact of AI-assisted prescription verification.