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American Heart Association®
Center for Health
Technology & Innovation



Greetings,

As December comes to a close, we reflect with gratitude for this year's and look ahead with momentum. This month's newsletter highlights key updates, milestones, and seasonal notes as we prepare for a strong start to the new year.

Visit <https://ahahealthtech.org/> to learn more about the Center and all the resources available to you.



From Our Hearts to Yours – Grateful for Your Time & Impact

As we close out the year, we extend our deepest appreciation to our volunteers for your dedication and service. Your commitment, professionalism and generosity of time have been essential to advancing our mission and supporting those we serve. Each contribution, whether visible or behind the scenes, has made a meaningful difference. On behalf of CHTI, thank you for your partnership and invaluable support. We wish you a safe and restful holiday season and look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead.



Scientific Sessions — A Look Back and Ahead

Missed this year's Scientific Sessions? You can still experience three days of digital health innovation with panels, tech demos, competitions, and roundtables all on demand

Health Innovation Pavilion [sizzle video](#)
[HIP sessions](#)
Individual [interviews](#)

Planning for Scientific Sessions 2026 is already underway, with #AHA26 headed to Chicago. We invite your input and ideas for next year's programming in the Health Innovation Pavilion. Help shape what's next—submit your ideas [here](#).



Dr. Eduardo Sanchez addressed the cardiovascular impact of influenza during a roundtable discussion hosted by the Coalition to Stop Flu and moderated by Sen. Tom Daschle. *(Photo courtesy of Sardari Group, Inc.)*

Congressional roundtable gets to the heart of flu

Flu can be especially dangerous for people with heart disease, who account for over half of annual flu hospitalizations, according to the CDC. Reducing preventable illness and hospitalizations was the focus of a bipartisan Congressional roundtable hosted by the Coalition to Stop Flu after National Influenza Vaccination Week.

Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., FAHA, chief medical officer for prevention at the American

Heart Association, emphasized that flu vaccination protects both individuals and their communities. “Every flu shot helps prevent severe illness, hospitalizations, and even death, especially among older adults and those with chronic conditions,” he said.

CDC estimates show at least 1.9 million illnesses, 19,000 hospitalizations, and 730 deaths this season, with an economic impact of \$361 billion annually. The AHA continues to advocate for flu vaccination, particularly for those with cardiovascular disease or a history of stroke.



Cuffless blood pressure technologies in wearable devices show promise to transform care

Cuffless devices like smartwatches, rings, patches, and fingertip monitors show promise for measuring blood pressure but are not yet accurate enough to diagnose or guide treatment for hypertension, according to a new American Heart Association (AHA) scientific statement in *Hypertension*. The statement reviews available technologies, their potential applications, and key limitations, supporting the 2025 AHA/ACC High Blood Pressure Guideline, which advises against using these devices for clinical decision-making until their precision improves.

While cuffless devices are convenient and allow frequent or continuous monitoring, experts caution that commercialization has outpaced scientific validation. With nearly half of U.S. adults affected by high blood pressure—a leading risk factor for cardiovascular and kidney disease—the AHA emphasizes the need for reliable devices before they can be used safely in clinical or home settings.

Read the full statement [here](#).



MicroTransponder Announces Positive Medicare Payment Change for Vivistim® Procedure

Innovators' Network member MicroTransponder®, developer of the Vivistim® Paired VNS™ System for chronic stroke recovery, announced that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has assigned the Vivistim procedure to New Technology Ambulatory Payment Classification (APC) 1580, with an average outpatient payment of approximately \$45,000, effective January 1, 2026. This reimbursement aligns with the resources required for the procedure, supporting sustainable hospital adoption and broader access for Medicare beneficiaries.

Richard Foust, MicroTransponder's CEO, emphasized that the decision highlights the therapy's benefits and addresses a critical unmet need in stroke recovery, helping ensure eligible patients nationwide can access Vivistim Therapy.

Read full announcement [here](#).



Brainomix Study in Lancet Digital Health Shows Brainomix 360 Stroke Boosts Thrombectomy Rates

Brainomix announced a real-world study, published in *The Lancet Digital Health*, showing that its AI imaging platform, Brainomix 360 Stroke, significantly increases endovascular thrombectomy (EVT) rates and reduces delays in stroke patient triage and transfer. The study highlights improved access to care, particularly in non-specialist hospitals and demonstrates that the platform can enhance clinical outcomes at scale.

Dr. George Harston, Brainomix's Chief Medical and Innovation Officer, emphasized that the results validate previous findings and show the broad, real-world impact of AI technology in improving stroke care across NHS England.

Read full announcement [here](#).



Welcome New Innovators' Network Members

The Innovators' Network is a fee-based consortium of industry entrepreneurs, providers and health systems, researchers, pharma, device manufacturers, community and social support networks and payors.

Membership offers research collaboration, AHA brand affiliation, access to a network of volunteer and industry experts and participation at AHA industry events.

Join us in welcoming our newest members of the Innovators' Network!

[Prudential Insurance Company of America](#) - Provides various insurance, retirement, and investment solutions, primarily life insurance, group benefits, annuities, and asset management to individuals, families, and institutions, helping them grow wealth, plan for retirement, and protect against financial risks like illness or death.

Members with non-product news (e.g., funding, trials, publications, exe hires), please submit via the AHA Innovators' Network Member News and Updates [Form](#) on the CHTI's [website](#). Approved submissions will be published on [ahahealthtech.org](#) and/or LinkedIn.

Learn more about becoming a member of the Innovators' Network and view all members [here](#).



Webinar: Hear from the AI Research Award Winners

In this previously recorded discussion, hear from the Kaiser Permanente and University of Michigan research teams recently awarded \$10.5 million by the American Heart Association to explore how AI can improve and speed up screening and treatment for heart disease.

You will hear engaging conversation with:

Moderator:

- Svati Shah, MD, MHS, Associate Dean for Translational Research and Director of the Duke Precision Genomics Collaboratory

Speakers:

- David Ouyang, MD, Research Scientist, Division of Research, Kaiser Permanente Northern California and Associate Professor at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
- Cindy Hsu, MD, PhD, Division Chief of Critical Care, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Surgery at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Watch recording [here](#)!

The recording will be posted on our [YouTube channel](#). While you're there, check out our past webinars such as [Revolutionizing Cardiology: The Future of Imaging](#)

[Innovations](#) and [What's the American Heart Association doing in AI? A conversation with Ali Gates](#)



Webinar: Smarter Care or Risky Business? Evaluating AI in Health Care

Join the American Heart Association's Center for Health Technology and Innovation for a webinar examining the promise—and pitfalls—of artificial intelligence in health care. As AI-driven tools rapidly expand across clinical decision support, diagnostics, and patient engagement, questions about safety, equity, and accountability are front and center. Our expert panel of clinicians, technologists, and policy leaders will explore real-world applications, highlight emerging best practices, and discuss how innovators are addressing challenges such as bias, transparency, and regulatory oversight. Don't miss this opportunity to learn what's working, what's risky, and what the future holds for AI-enabled care.

Join the conversation Wednesday, January 7, 2026, 12:00pm EST.

Moderator:

- Sneha S. Jain, MD, MBA, Clinical Assistant, Professor of Medicine, Stanford University

Speakers:

- Alexander J. Blood, MD, MSc, FACC, Co-founder and CEO, AlwithCare, Cardiologist Intensivist and Clinical Research, Brigham and Women's Hospital

- Dave Newman, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Virtual Care, Sanford Health
- Michelle A. Albert, MD MPH FACC FAHA, Walter A. Haas-Lucie Stern Endowed Chair in Cardiology, Professor of Medicine / Director, Center for the Study of Adversity and Cardiovascular Disease (NURTURE Center), Associate Dean of Admissions, UCSF School of Medicine

Register to join LIVE here:

https://heart.zoom.us/webinar/register/9417660716281/WN_YO9IHApDT8etxoJPu_9pCW

You can browse all past issues in our [newsletter archive](#) to catch up on key stories and insights. Make sure you're in the loop— [don't miss our news and updates section](#).

We are eager to hear from you. Send Darcy Barrett, darcy.barrett@heart.org, your ideas for what you want included in the monthly newsletter.

Know someone who wants to join our mailing list? Forward the "sign up for our mailing list" [link](#).

Until next month!



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