UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences

Department of Neurology

John W. Engstrom, MD
Professor and Vice Chair for
Clinical Affairs
Director, Adult Neurology Residency
Program

505 Parnassus Avenue, M-798
San Francisco, CA 94143-0114

Tel: 415.476-1489
John.engstrom@ucsf.edu

April 7, 2025

To the AI/ Machine Learning Demonstration Pilot Project 2025
Selection Committee:

I fully support the proposed project to develop and validate the **AI TRI**age **A**ide (ATRIA) tool to enhance the processing of neurology referrals. This much-needed initiative addresses critical inefficiencies in our current patient referral processing system that 1) negatively impact patient care, 2) contribute to provider and staff burn out, and 3) inadequately adapts to evolving patient referral patterns.

As clinicians, we are acutely aware of the challenges in the current referral process. The proposed ATRIA tool would serve as a dynamic assistant in the referral workflow by streamlining information collection from referrals and analyzing clinical data to help connect patients to the correct outpatient care team. Delays in routing, incomplete information extraction, and difficulty identifying urgent cases increase the risk of compromised patient outcomes and inefficient use of limited neurological resources. This AI-assisted approach can address these challenges in a dynamic, efficient, and iterative fashion.

The systematic validation of this tool represents a thoughtful approach to technological integration at UCSF Health. By optimizing administrative tasks and information organization, rather than diagnostic decision-making, this project strikes an appropriate balance between technological assistance and clinical expertise.
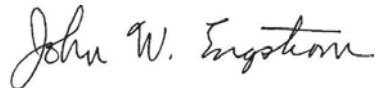
I believe this initiative will lead to reduced processing time for patient referrals, more appropriate matching of patients to specialized care and earlier identification of urgent neurological conditions while supporting the existing decision trees for neurology clinic patient assignment.

Better utilization of neurology subspecialty expertise will improve access for patients who need neurological care.

I enthusiastically support this project and am committed to doing everything I can to ensure its success. As Neurology Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs, I have a long record of accomplishment of working closely with UCSF Health Administrative and Managerial staff on clinical operations. I look forward to the positive impact that the ATRIA tool can have on streamlining referral processes, improving patient care, and optimizing the use of specialized neurological services.

Sincerely,

John W. Engstrom

John Engstrom, MD
Betty Anker Fife Distinguished Professor of Neurology
Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs
Department to of Neurology
UCSF