

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly entering pediatric health care, including platforms that generate school absence notes and other clinical documentation. While AI has the potential to support clinicians and improve efficiency, its use must remain grounded in safe, ethical, and clinically responsible practice—especially when documentation impacts a child’s health, education, and well-being.

Policy Recommendations

- 1. School absence notes must be issued only by a physician or licensed health care provider practicing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.**
This ensures that documentation reflects the professional judgment of a clinician who is accountable to Virginia’s licensing, regulatory, and clinical standards.
- 2. Any school absence note must be based on an appropriate clinical assessment.**
 - This may occur **in person or via telehealth**, consistent with AAP best-practice guidance for virtual care.
 - The assessment must collect clinically relevant history, symptoms, and/or objective findings as appropriate for the condition.
- 3. AI-generated documentation without a clinical encounter is not acceptable.**
Increasingly, commercial AI companies provide school notes based solely on symptom checkers, questionnaires, or automated algorithms without the child ever being seen or evaluated by a clinician.
- 4. These practices do not meet accepted pediatric standards of care, pose risks of misdiagnosis, and create documentation that lacks the reliability required by schools, families, and the health system.**
- 5. AI tools used within pediatric care should follow AAP principles for responsible implementation.**
This includes ensuring clinician oversight, transparency around AI use, safeguards against bias, and adherence to privacy and data-security standards.

Conclusion

The VA-AAP strongly supports innovation in pediatric health care, including thoughtful use of AI. However, school absence documentation—like all medical documentation—must remain anchored in **licensed clinical evaluation, professional accountability, and evidence-based pediatric standards**. Protecting the health and safety of Virginia’s children requires that only qualified clinicians provide such documentation, whether delivered in person or via telehealth.

AAP Links:

[Telehealth: Improving Access to and Quality of Pediatric Health Care](#)

[Artificial Intelligence in Pediatric Health Care](#)