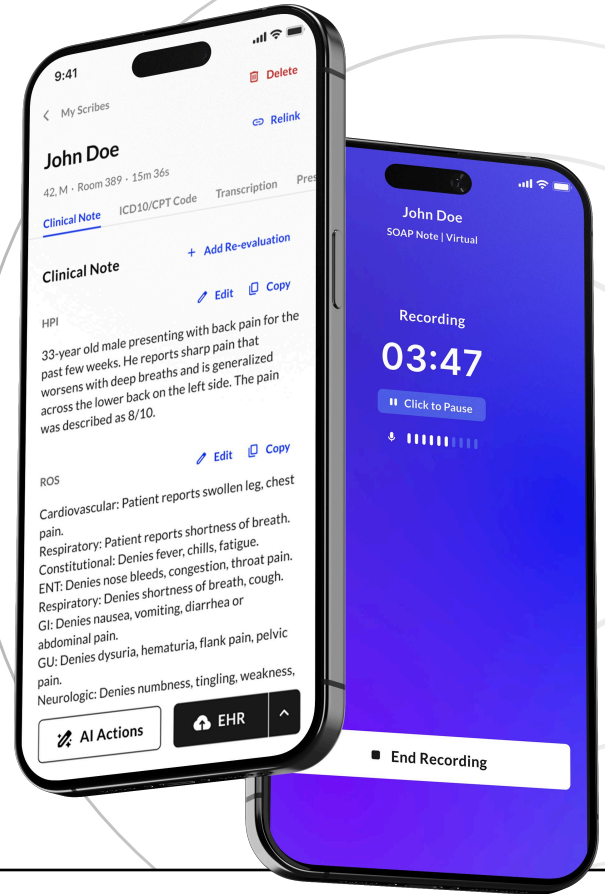


Top 5 Questions Healthcare Leaders Ask Before Switching to Ambient AI Scribes

Thinking about switching to an AI scribe? It can feel like a big jump; you're already pulled in all directions by patient care, compliance, staffing shortages, and tight budgets. Ambient AI scribes—tools that “listen” to clinical visits and automatically generate notes—promise to reduce documentation time and provider burnout. But naturally, questions come up. Based on feedback from providers, administrators, compliance officers, and IT leads, here are the top five concerns we hear most, along with clear answers to help you decide if ambient AI is a fit for your practice.



QUESTION 1

Is Ambient AI Secure and HIPAA-Compliant?

Yes—but always verify. Patient data is sacred. Most reputable ambient AI scribes are designed with HIPAA in mind, using encrypted audio processing and secure cloud storage. They often operate as HIPAA-eligible services, requiring business associate agreements (BAAs) with vendors to ensure protected health information (PHI) stays safe.

To double-check, ask vendors about their data encryption, access controls, and audit trails. Recent guidelines emphasize patient consent for recordings, so build that into your workflows to avoid breaches. Ask how long they retain raw audio (some don't store it at all) and how patient consent is handled. Newer systems are built to minimize risk while staying compliant—and some even help automate consent workflows.

QUESTION 2

How Accurate Are Ambient AI Scribes in Real-World Use?

Very accurate—but not perfect. Leading tools claim 90-99% accuracy in transcribing and structuring notes, but real-world results depend on factors like accents, background noise, and specialty-specific terms. Studies show that while ambient AI handles most conversations well, most providers report spending 1–2 minutes per note on edits—which is still much faster than starting from scratch.

For mid-market practices, look for systems with customizable templates and learning capabilities that improve over time. Pilots in large systems have reported solid performance across specialties, but always test in your environment to confirm it meets your needs.

QUESTION 3

What Are the Liability Implications of Using Ambient AI?

Liability concerns loom, particularly around who bears responsibility if an AI-generated note leads to a care issue. Clinicians remain ultimately accountable for reviewing and signing off on notes, just like with human scribes. Many AI tools are positioned as aids, not medical devices, which means they don't fall under FDA regulation but still carry risks like data privacy lapses or inaccuracies.

Consult your malpractice insurer early and ensure clear policies for note verification. It's important to note that some practices have actually seen fewer errors—AI often picks up details that rushed typing can overlook.

QUESTION 4

How Does Ambient AI Impact Patient Experience?

Most patients appreciate it—when it's explained well. No one wants tech that disrupts the doctor-patient bond, so questions about ambient AI for healthcare often focus on this. Instead of typing during visits, providers can focus on face-to-face conversation. This clearly improves rapport and communication. Surveys from 2025 pilots show patients report neutral to positive experiences, feeling more heard during visits. In one large rollout, ambient AI helped restore "the human side of medicine" by freeing up time for better communication.

For compliance and IT leads, disclose AI use upfront to build trust—most patients are fine with it when explained. A quick and upfront breakdown ("This tool helps me focus more on you and less on my screen") builds trust and consent.

QUESTION 5

What's the ROI and How Hard Is Implementation?

Can the switch to an AI scribe pay off without major headaches? The ROI can be fast and implementation is often easier than expected—often starting with a pilot in one department and scaling in weeks, with training taking just hours. ROI comes from time savings: think 1-2 hours per provider daily on documentation, reducing burnout and overtime costs. Studies indicate breakeven in 3-6 months for many practices, with ongoing gains in efficiency and revenue capture. Pricing varies (\$50-200/month per user), so factor in EHR integration and support. For mid-market groups, the key is choosing scalable tools that align with your workflows to maximize value without disrupting operations.

Your Next Steps with Ambient AI

Let's be real—switching to ambient AI scribes can feel daunting, but tackling these questions head-on makes it a lot less intimidating. With the right system, you're looking at less time charting, happier providers, and better patient interactions, all while staying on the right side of compliance. The next steps from here are kicking things off with a small pilot in one department. Test it, tweak it, and roll it out when it feels right for your team.

Athelas Ambient AI is tailored across clinicians, specialties, and care settings—and integrates deeply with all EHRs. It's like having an assistant for every clinical step you take. Our goal is to help practices eliminate busy work and focus on better care.

Book a demo with Athelas to explore how our specialty-tailored AI solution cuts charting time, boosts patient satisfaction, and delivers real ROI.

