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NEWSLETTER · IN CONVERSATION WITH TOM FARRAND

AI agents for the parts nobody enjoys

Tom Farrand — CEO and co-founder of Delfa — on a career at the seam of AI and life sciences, and building agents that automate clinical operations, starting with the recruitment bottleneck.

Tom Farrand has spent his career where AI meets life sciences — from IBM, helping university hospitals model 3D scans on supercomputers, to rolling out AI infrastructure for the likes of Janssen and Medtronic. Now, as CEO and co-founder of Delfa, he's building AI agents to automate clinical operations, beginning with patient recruitment, with a stated aim of accelerating access to treatments by reimagining how patients connect with trials.

> We build AI agents to automate the parts of a trial that shouldn't need a human.
>
> — Tom Farrand, on Pharma Prescribed

Start where it hurts

Delfa's opening target is recruitment, the same bottleneck that quietly delays most trials. Tom's framing is that a lot of that work is exactly the kind of repetitive, rules-heavy coordination that agents can now shoulder — freeing scarce human attention for judgement rather than admin.

Infrastructure, not hype

His background is telling: not chatbots, but AI infrastructure inside serious healthcare organisations. That's a different discipline from demo-day AI — it has to be reliable, integrated and trusted before it's clever. It shows in how he talks about agents as operational tooling rather than magic.

The point is access

Underneath the engineering, the mission is unromantic and clear: get lifesaving treatments to people faster by removing friction between patients and the trials that might help them. Automating clinical operations is the means; shortening the distance to a patient is the end.

Listen to the full episode

Tom Farrand on Pharma Prescribed — at pharmaprescribed.com and wherever you get your podcasts.

Tom Farrand *is the CEO and co-founder of Delfa, building AI agents to automate clinical operations.*