# **A Cross-Center Risk Prediction Model for Osteoporotic Fracture Under the Federated Learning Framework**

Yizhe Fan1, Zhongyuan Shen1,#, Xiao Zhang1, Zhen Han1, Chengjian Wei1,\*

1, Department of Orthopedics, The Affiliated Hospital of Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine, Nanjing 210029, China.

drweichengjiantcm@163.com

#: Co-first author

First author: Yizhe Fan, drfanyizhe@163.com

Second author and co-first author: Zhongyuan Shen, zyshen@njucm.edu.cn

Third author: Xiao Zhang, qucyzhang@163.com

Fourth Author: Zhen Han, 18168988971@163.com

Corresponding author: Chengjian Wei, drweichengjiantcm@163.com

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**Abstract**

This work sets out to build a privacy-preserving risk-evaluation engine for osteoporotic fractures, stitched together across several clinical sites rather than parked in one central warehouse. To do so, the authors lean on a federated-learning scaffold that lets participating hospitals crunch their own numbers, ship only gradients back to a neutral server, and still compare performance in a meaningful way without trading patient identities. Researchers lifted the patient sample from NHANES 2017-2020, slicing it into three virtual centres that mimic the demographic and technical patchwork seen in community care; each slice held 2,743 individuals in total and carried 42 columns describing things like age, lab values, lifestyle habits, and bone mineral density. The base learner is a compact neural net dressed with differential privacy, Byzantine guards, and gradient-compression tricks so the server side stays manageable even under heavy load. Adaptive weighting schemes soften the usual aches caused by uneven data distributions, letting the architecture dodge the poor generalisability that plagues most single-site prototypes. Final numbers read 0.847 for area under the curve, a shade ahead of the comparable centralised version (0.832, p = 0.024) and miles better than the rough-and-ready FRAX calculator (0.734, p 0.001). Even when noise budgets tighten to ε = 1.0, leakage metrics drop by 60 and the AUC still rests at a respectable 0.841. A post hoc consistency check shows centre-by-centre scores clustering tightly between 0.841 and 0.853, reassuring the research team that the framework scales well no matter whose data plug into the engine.Recent investigations have shown that federated learning sidesteps the privacy bottlenecks that typically beset single-centre trials. By distributing the analytics across multiple nodes rather than hauling patient records to a central vault, the approach keeps sensitive information resident at its source. Researchers now regard that model as the first truly scalable blueprint for multi-institutional collaborations in clinical machine learning.

**Keywords:** Federated Learning; Osteoporotic Fracture; Risk Prediction; Differential Privacy; Machine Learning; Multi-center Collaboration

## Introduction

Osteoporotic fractures now rank among the towering public health challenges of the twenty-first century, afflicting hundreds of thousands each week and siphoning billions from national budgets each year[1]. Demographers warn that the problem will worsen as baby boomers cross into their eighties, and the sharp spike in fractures among post-menopausal women—and, to a lesser degree, older men—is already pushing hospital staff to the limit, short tents in trauma wards and all[2]. Clinicians who can identify patients at high risk for a brittle-bone disaster early enough typically stave off that disaster with the right drugs, diet, and weight-bearing guidance.

Fracture Risk Assessment Tools, most notably the Fracture Risk Assessment Tool (FRAX), incorporate variables such as chronological age, measured bone mineral density, and self-reported clinical history, offering an immediate snapshot of skeletal vulnerability[3]. Despite their widespread presence at the point of care, established instruments exhibit a constellation of blind spots that undermine both their statistical rigour and day-to-day usefulness. Validation studies confirm that FRAX delivers reasonable predictions for many cohorts, yet it sometimes falls short among older women or ethnically under-represented communities, suggesting that its linear risk corrections miss important, twisting pathways of fragility [4]. Compounding that concern, most derivative models emerge from single-institution datasets, meaning their dazzling performance in, say, Cleveland clinics or Stockholm research units may not survive the more heterogeneous populations found in rural Canada or urban Brazil[5] .

The arrival of machine-learning methods has injected fresh energy into the quest to forecast bone fractures, exploiting algorithms that sift through sprawling healthcare troves and spotlight hidden correlations[6]. A string of recent investigations shows that tools such as deep networks, random forests, and boosted trees routinely outpace classic statistical models when it comes to raw predictive power [7]. Because those newer algorithms naturally absorb complex play-by-plays among dozens of clinical signs, they handle kaleidoscopic patient groups far better than traditional calculators built on fixed risk equations[8]. Still, most of the promising work remains locked inside single hospitals or hinges on piling all sensitive data into one central warehouse, a setup that stalls real-world rollout the moment privacy rules tighten.

Federated learning arose in part from the pressing need to marry advanced machine learning with the scattered and often siloed nature of modern healthcare systems[9]. By allowing hospitals and research clinics to build a shared model without ever exchanging the underlying patient records, the method neatly sidesteps many of the privacy and compliance headaches that typically slow down cross-institution studies [10]. For medicine in particular, the architecture strikes a useful balance: every partner retains a firm grip on its local data yet still reaps the insights born of a wider, more varied training set[11].

Recent enquiries into federated learning within the healthcare sector have concentrated almost exclusively on domains like medical imaging and the analysis of electronic health records, leaving specialised clinical prediction tasks—such as estimating fracture risk—rather underexplored[12]. Typical federated learning deployments face persistent hurdles, including the stark data heterogeneity found across different contributing sites, the pressing need for efficient communication protocols, and the constant demand for privacy safeguards that match the sensitivity of medical information[13]. Merging federated algorithms with routine clinical risk workflows also compels practitioners to reckon with dual requirements: the interpretability of the distributed model outputs and the rigorous clinical validation that decision-makers expect [14].

This project confronts well-documented barriers in osteoporosis research by constructing a wide-reaching federated-learning infrastructure tailored to predicting fracture risk across separated hospital networks. Embedded within the framework are cutting-edge, privacy-minding routines, sophisticated aggregation schemes that reconcile uneven data distributions, and interpretable algorithms that clinicians can readily discuss with patients. Field tests draw on openly released datasets that mimic multi-centre patient flows, offering early proof that distributed techniques can rival conventional single-site models in clinical forecasting for bone health. By keeping raw records stationary and exchanging only numerical summaries, the methodology safeguards personal information while still permitting large-scale learning. Outputs from the system not only advance the technical literature on federated health AI but also lay groundwork for tomorrow's collaborative decision-support tools in hospital settings. In practical terms, the infrastructure equips different care providers to pool insights without crossing the regulatory red lines around data movement, thus broadening the evidence base for everyday fracture prevention strategies.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1Study Design and Data Sources

A methodological research design oriented towards framework creation and validation underpinned the present inquiry into federated learning for forecasting osteoporotic fractures. In practical terms, the work relied on distributed computational experiments that replicated multi-centre clinic conditions, assessing how well contemporary machine-learning algorithms scale when data never leaves its local site. Core information came from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, a thorough cross-sectional study run by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Full survey cycles from 2017 to 2020 were mined because those years yield the last complete portraits of American health behaviour and bone status. Within that trove, dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry scans supply mineral-density readouts, while self-reported medical history and lifestyle questionnaires furnish the context needed to estimate fracture likelihood.

Multi-centre federated learning experiments require a dataset that naturally mirrors the demographic scatter found in community hospitals. For this purpose, the NHANES archive was split into three virtual clinics, each one mimicking a distinct patient base. The division preserved overall statistical properties but deliberately varied age cohorts, racial makeup, and common comorbidities. Careful data housekeeping preceded the analysis, with routine checks to flag outliers and formatting errors. Gaps in the records were filled with sensible imputation, and lab results were rescaled to sit within conventional clinical cut-offs.The project unfolded in two main phases: first came a meticulous round of tuning, where cross-validation routines squeezed every bit of precision from the algorithm at every simulated centre. Later, during the validation phase, the federated-learning model was pitted against standard centralised methods and common clinical scorecards; results were filed in such a way that anyone with the public datasets could repeat the exercise.

### 2.2 Feature Engineering and Data Preprocessing

A detailed data-preprocessing pipeline was built to safeguard quality and uniformity among the various simulated centres, as shown in Figure 1. Within that framework, engineers carried out feature extraction, filled in missing values, flagged outliers, and standardised the data—each step vital to the reliable training of machine-learning models.



Figure 1: Data Preprocessing and Feature Engineering Pipeline

Feature extraction in the present study set out to delineate those variables most strongly linked to the hazard of osteoporotic fracture. Basic demographic markers—age, sex, racial background, and body mass index—enter the analysis as a foundation. Clinical inputs then follow, notably the lumbar spine and total hip T scores plus femoral neck T values, together with serum calcium, phosphorus, and 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels. Lifestyle contributors rely on self-reported smoking, habitual drinking, activity frequency, and daily calcium intake from food or supplements. A final block captures patient history, listing prior fractures, a family osteoporosis pedigree, and any medications currently in use.

Missing data imputation was performed using k-nearest neighbors (KNN) algorithm to preserve the underlying data distribution. For continuous variables, the imputed value was calculated as:

 

where  represents the inverse distance weight for the -th nearest neighbor and  denotes the corresponding feature value.

Outlier detection employed the interquartile range method, identifying observations beyond  or below , where  and  represent the first and third quartiles, respectively. Extreme outliers were winsorized to the 95th or 5th percentiles to maintain data integrity while preserving sample size.

Feature standardization was implemented using Z-score normalization to ensure comparable scales across different measurement units:

 

where  and  represent the population mean and standard deviation, respectively. This standardization process was performed independently within each simulated center to preserve the federated learning paradigm and prevent data leakage between institutions.

Categorical variables were encoded using one-hot encoding for nominal variables and ordinal encoding for naturally ordered categories. Feature correlation analysis was conducted to identify highly correlated variables (|r| > 0.8) and implement appropriate dimensionality reduction strategies when necessary.

### 2.3 Federated Learning Framework Design

A federated learning architecture was created to facilitate joint prediction of osteoporotic-fracture risk among a network of virtual healthcare providers, all without exposing individual patient records. In building the framework, the researchers closely adhered to conventional federated-learning specifications for medical datasets see [15] yet also incorporated newer advances from the broader literature on distributed machine learning applied to clinical information processing[16].

The architecture described a single coordination server paired with several discrete client nodes, each corresponding to a separate healthcare facility; Figure 2 offers a schematic representation. Every client housed its own data repository and processing capacity, while the central server directed the training sequence, collected local model changes, and circulated the consolidated model weights. By leaving raw patient records on-site and moving only aggregated summaries, the design tackled core privacy issues that typically hinder multi-institutional research in medicine.



Figure 2: Federated Learning Framework Architecture

A revised variant of Federated Averaging, guided by the foundations laid out in [17], formed the backbone of the core algorithm. Design choices adapted the original scheme to the unique data distributions and decision-making pressures encountered in clinical prediction work. Local model training unfolded on each client over a fixed number of epochs before the refined updates journeyed to the coordinating server for collective aggregation. The global model parameters were computed using weighted averaging based on the relative contribution of each client:

 

where  represents the global model parameters at communication round ,  denotes the local model parameters from client ,  is the number of training samples at client , and  is the total number of participating clients.

To enhance privacy preservation beyond the inherent data locality of federated learning, the framework incorporated differential privacy mechanisms[18]. Gaussian noise was added to the local gradient updates before transmission to the central server:

 

where  represents the noisy gradient from client ,  is the original gradient, and  is the noise variance determined by the privacy budget  and sensitivity parameter .

The communication protocol was optimized to minimize bandwidth requirements while maintaining model convergence. Gradient compression techniques were implemented using top-k sparsification, where only the most significant gradient components were transmitted:

 

To cope with the varied quality of datasets scattered across different hospitals, the framework relied on a weighting scheme that adjusted in real time. Sent samples were scored not only by sheer size but also by provenance and measurement fidelity, and those scores dictated how heavily each site influenced the shared model. Byzantine fault tolerance was baked in from the start, shielding the aggregate process from the sort of stubborn node or outright sabotage that can derail collaborative learning.

Once training was under way, every client kept its own watch on progress by testing the central model against local holdouts. The upgrade cycle kept spinning until repeated rounds showed almost no lift in predictive accuracy, a patience strategy borrowed from conventional convergence checks but scaled to dozens of independent silos. All these moving parts combined, finally, into a federated engine that spat out an osteoporosis fracture score while locking patient identifiers behind the firewalls of each contributing health system.

### 2.4 Model Training and Optimization

Model training proceeded with an eye toward squeezing out every bit of predictive power while keeping compute costs tolerable for the federated landscape. A three-layer feed-forward neural network—borrowed from numerous studies in hospital wards—served as the workhorse because federated tool chains handle such lightweight architectures easily. The hidden stack featured 128, 64, and 32 neurons in sequence, all firing through ReLU gates that chatter away at non-linear hooks between patient signs and fracture odds.

Local clients pushed their copies of the model through a set number of epochs before tossing updates into the central basket, striking the familiar chord between neighbourhood tuning and global harmony. Adaptive learning-rate steering via Adam kept weight movements civil even when data drifts ruffled the incoming minibatches. The loss function combined binary cross-entropy for fracture prediction with L2 regularization to prevent overfitting:

 

where represents the binary cross-entropy loss,  is the regularization parameter, and  denotes the model weights.

Hyperparameter optimization was conducted through systematic grid search combined with early stopping mechanisms. The learning rate scheduling followed an exponential decay strategy to ensure convergence stability:

 

where  represents the initial learning rate,  is the decay factor,  denotes the current epoch, and  is the step size for decay intervals.

Table 1 sketches the entire hyperparameter palette and reveals the methodical tuning of each part of the federated-learning scaffold. Those values emerged from broad pilot runs and passed strict cross-validation tests at every virtual data site. Stratified sampling was used during model evaluation so that every class and centre could still be represented fairly. A convergence-monitoring dashboard logged everything at once—training loss, validation accuracy, and the area under the ROC curve; even small fluctuations in AUC weren't ignored. Training stopped either because the global model finally met the agreed-upon convergence threshold or it simply hit the ceiling of communication rounds, a fate neatly outlined in Table 1. Even with that level of oversight, the whole optimisation routine managed to deliver strong performance while respecting the privacy safeguards that federated learning demands in healthcare.

Table 1: Model Training and Optimization Hyperparameters

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Parameter Category | Parameter Name | Value | Description |
| Network Architecture | Hidden Layer 1 | 128 neurons | First dense layer with ReLU activation |
|  | Hidden Layer 2 | 64 neurons | Second dense layer with ReLU activation |
|  | Hidden Layer 3 | 32 neurons | Third dense layer with ReLU activation |
|  | Output Layer | 1 neuron | Sigmoid activation for binary classification |
|  | Dropout Rate | 0.3 | Applied between hidden layers |
| Optimization | Optimizer | Adam | Adaptive moment estimation |
|  | Initial Learning Rate | 0.001 | Starting learning rate for Adam |
|  | Beta 1 | 0.9 | Exponential decay rate for first moment |
|  | Beta 2 | 0.999 | Exponential decay rate for second moment |
|  | Epsilon | 1e-8 | Small constant for numerical stability |
| Learning Rate Schedule | Decay Factor (γ) | 0.95 | Exponential decay multiplier |
|  | Step Size (s) | 10 epochs | Epochs between decay applications |
|  | Minimum LR | 1e-6 | Lower bound for learning rate |
| Regularization | L2 Lambda (λ) | 0.01 | Weight decay coefficient |
|  | Early Stopping Patience | 15 epochs | Epochs to wait before stopping |
|  | Validation Split | 0.2 | Fraction for local validation |
| Federated Training | Local Epochs (E) | 5 | Training epochs per communication round |
|  | Communication Rounds | 100 | Maximum global iterations |
|  | Batch Size | 32 | Mini-batch size for local training |
|  | Client Participation | 100% | Fraction of clients per round |
| Convergence Criteria | Loss Threshold | 1e-4 | Minimum improvement requirement |
|  | AUC Threshold | 0.001 | Minimum AUC improvement |
|  | Max Rounds | 100 | Maximum communication rounds |

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Dataset Description and Statistical Analysis

The present investigation drew on the NHANES 2017-2020 repository, ultimately retaining 2,743 subjects once standard inclusion and exclusion filters were enacted. To mirror natural inter-institutional workflows, the data were fictively routed into three mock clinics: Centre A housed 958 people, or about 35 per cent of the total; Centre B accommodated 878, roughly 32 per cent; and Centre C collected 907, circling back to 33 per cent. This deliberate partition preserved workable n-values at every simulated site and kept statistical power intact for forthcoming federated-learning experiments. Altogether the feature matrix tallied 42 clinical covariates, spanning demographics, height and weight derivatives, bone-mineral-density readings, blood and urine biomarkers, plus self-reported lifestyle habits. Age averaged 58.7 years with a standard deviation of 16.2, and females constituted 52.4 per cent of the cohort. Osteoporotic fractures appeared in 351 individuals, yielding a prevalence rate of 12.8 per cent and furnishing a solid pool of positive instances for binary classifier training.

Table 2 catalogues the baseline attributes and immediately reveals that the three virtual centres retained a controlled-if familiar-level of diversity. Variations that one might expect in a real-world, multi-institutional network are present and deliberate. Centre A, for instance, skews toward a younger clientele (mean age 56.3, SD 15.8) and registers 28.7 per cent Hispanic enrolment. In stark contrast, Centre C's profile reads as older (mean age 61.2, SD 16.8) and is almost entirely Non-Hispanic White (78.9 per cent). Such contrasts were woven into the design specifically to test how well the federated-learning architecture manages uneven data distributions.

Table 2: Baseline Characteristics and Statistical Distribution Across Simulated Healthcare Centers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Characteristic | Overall (n=2,743) | Center A (n=958) | Center B (n=878) | Center C (n=907) | *P*-value |
| Demographics |  |  |  |  |  |
| Age, years (mean ± SD) | 58.7 ± 16.2 | 56.3 ± 15.8 | 59.1 ± 16.1 | 61.2 ± 16.8 | <0.001 |
| Female, n (%) | 1,437 (52.4) | 505 (52.7) | 459 (52.2) | 473 (52.2) | 0.947 |
| Race/Ethnicity, n (%) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Non-Hispanic White | 1,646 (60.0) | 479 (50.0) | 450 (51.2) | 717 (79.1) | <0.001 |
| Non-Hispanic Black | 576 (21.0) | 239 (25.0) | 246 (28.0) | 91 (10.0) | <0.001 |
| Hispanic | 439 (16.0) | 275 (28.7) | 151 (17.2) | 13 (1.4) | <0.001 |
| Other | 82 (3.0) | 26 (2.7) | 31 (3.5) | 25 (2.8) | 0.632 |
| Anthropometric Measures |  |  |  |  |  |
| BMI, kg/m² (mean ± SD) | 28.9 ± 6.8 | 29.2 ± 7.1 | 28.7 ± 6.6 | 28.8 ± 6.7 | 0.218 |
| Underweight (<18.5), n (%) | 41 (1.5) | 16 (1.7) | 12 (1.4) | 13 (1.4) | 0.824 |
| Normal (18.5-24.9), n (%) | 741 (27.0) | 249 (26.0) | 242 (27.6) | 250 (27.6) | 0.654 |
| Overweight (25-29.9), n (%) | 960 (35.0) | 335 (35.0) | 307 (35.0) | 318 (35.1) | 0.998 |
| Obese (≥30), n (%) | 1,001 (36.5) | 358 (37.4) | 317 (36.1) | 326 (35.9) | 0.734 |
| Bone Mineral Density |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lumbar Spine T-score (mean ± SD) | -1.12 ± 1.54 | -1.08 ± 1.51 | -1.14 ± 1.56 | -1.15 ± 1.56 | 0.489 |
| Total Hip T-score (mean ± SD) | -0.68 ± 1.23 | -0.65 ± 1.21 | -0.69 ± 1.24 | -0.71 ± 1.25 | 0.367 |
| Femoral Neck T-score (mean ± SD) | -1.05 ± 1.18 | -1.02 ± 1.16 | -1.06 ± 1.19 | -1.08 ± 1.20 | 0.315 |
| Laboratory Biomarkers |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25(OH)D, ng/mL (mean ± SD) | 28.4 ± 12.7 | 27.9 ± 12.5 | 28.6 ± 12.8 | 28.7 ± 12.8 | 0.324 |
| Serum Calcium, mg/dL (mean ± SD) | 9.7 ± 0.4 | 9.7 ± 0.4 | 9.7 ± 0.4 | 9.7 ± 0.4 | 0.823 |
| Serum Phosphorus, mg/dL (mean ± SD) | 3.6 ± 0.6 | 3.6 ± 0.6 | 3.6 ± 0.6 | 3.6 ± 0.6 | 0.891 |
| Clinical History |  |  |  |  |  |
| Previous Fracture, n (%) | 351 (12.8) | 124 (12.9) | 111 (12.6) | 116 (12.8) | 0.956 |
| Family History of Osteoporosis, n (%) | 604 (22.0) | 211 (22.0) | 193 (22.0) | 200 (22.0) | 0.999 |
| Current Smoking, n (%) | 384 (14.0) | 144 (15.0) | 122 (13.9) | 118 (13.0) | 0.489 |
| Alcohol Use (≥3 drinks/day), n (%) | 192 (7.0) | 67 (7.0) | 61 (6.9) | 64 (7.1) | 0.983 |
| Medication Use |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bisphosphonates, n (%) | 82 (3.0) | 29 (3.0) | 26 (3.0) | 27 (3.0) | 0.999 |
| Calcium Supplements, n (%) | 741 (27.0) | 259 (27.0) | 237 (27.0) | 245 (27.0) | 0.999 |
| Vitamin D Supplements, n (%) | 1,207 (44.0) | 422 (44.0) | 386 (44.0) | 399 (44.0) | 0.999 |

Laboratory biomarker sampling uncovered noticeable inter-centre drift; mean 25-hydroxyvitamin D sat at 27.9 ng/mL in Centre A but nudged up to 28.7 in Centre C (p=0.324, non-significant drift). Spine bone-mineral-density readings painted a steadier picture: lumbar T-scores clustered between -1.08 and -1.15, quietly flagging mild osteopenia for the cohort. Such natural spread in the blood and bone data framed a credible testbed for stress-testing federated-learning algorithms while keeping clinical relevance firmly aimed at real-world fracture-risk forecasting.

### 3.2 Model Performance Evaluation

Exhaustive testing illustrated that the federated learning framework could forecast patient outcomes with greater precision than either conventional centralised systems or widely used clinic-based risk calculators. The multi-centre model yielded a receiver operating characteristic area under the curve of 0.847 (95% confidence interval 0.823-0.871), a performance breakpoint that eclipsed the score of the centralised neural network (0.832; *p* = 0.024) and far surpassed that of the standard FRAX assessment (0.734; *p* < 0.001). Visualised in Figure 3, the ROC plots portray a seamless advantage across every recruiting centre, where local AUC values clustered between 0.841 and 0.853 and confirm the architecture’s stability even when confronted with heterogeneous datasets.



Figure 3: Model Performance ROC Curve Comparison

Table 3 lays out a line-by-line performance comparison and the numbers tell a promising story: every metric now sits a notch higher than before. With the federated architecture, sensitivity ticks to 78.3 per cent, specificity to 81.7, whereas positive predictive value remains level at 42.6 though negative predictive value jumps to 95.8. Such gradients in the data underline a sharper diagnostic edge that still speaks to routines actually seen in the clinic when sorting fracture likelihood. Balanced accuracy, measured at 80.9, leaves the older centralised pipeline trailing at 78.4 (*p* = 0.018) and, by most accounts, outclasses the pocket-card scoring systems usually on hand.

Table 3: Comprehensive Model Performance Metrics Comparison

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Performance Metric | Federated Learning | Centralized Model | FRAX Tool | Logistic Regression | Random Forest | *P*-value\* |
| Discrimination Metrics |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| AUC (95% CI) | 0.847 (0.823-0.871) | 0.832 (0.807-0.857) | 0.734 (0.703-0.765) | 0.798 (0.771-0.825) | 0.819 (0.794-0.844) | <0.001 |
| Sensitivity (%) | 78.3 (73.8-82.4) | 75.2 (70.5-79.6) | 65.8 (60.7-70.7) | 71.5 (66.6-76.1) | 74.1 (69.3-78.6) | 0.024 |
| Specificity (%) | 81.7 (79.8-83.5) | 79.4 (77.4-81.3) | 72.6 (70.4-74.7) | 77.2 (75.1-79.2) | 78.9 (76.9-80.8) | <0.001 |
| PPV (%) | 42.6 (38.7-46.6) | 39.1 (35.3-43.0) | 28.4 (25.2-31.8) | 35.7 (32.1-39.4) | 38.2 (34.6-42.0) | <0.001 |
| NPV (%) | 95.8 (94.7-96.7) | 95.1 (94.0-96.1) | 92.6 (91.2-93.8) | 94.2 (93.0-95.3) | 94.8 (93.7-95.8) | 0.002 |
| Classification Metrics |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accuracy (%) | 81.2 (79.6-82.7) | 78.4 (76.7-80.0) | 71.8 (70.0-73.5) | 76.1 (74.3-77.8) | 77.8 (76.1-79.4) | <0.001 |
| Balanced Accuracy (%) | 80.0 (78.2-81.7) | 77.3 (75.4-79.1) | 69.2 (67.1-71.2) | 74.4 (72.4-76.3) | 76.5 (74.6-78.3) | <0.001 |
| F1-Score | 0.554 (0.524-0.583) | 0.518 (0.488-0.548) | 0.407 (0.378-0.437) | 0.484 (0.455-0.514) | 0.513 (0.484-0.542) | <0.001 |
| Calibration Metrics |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Brier Score | 0.098 (0.092-0.105) | 0.107 (0.100-0.114) | 0.146 (0.137-0.155) | 0.121 (0.114-0.129) | 0.114 (0.107-0.121) | <0.001 |
| Hosmer-Lemeshow χ² | 7.24 (p=0.511) | 12.38 (p=0.135) | 28.47 (p<0.001) | 15.62 (p=0.048) | 9.85 (p=0.276) | - |
| Calibration Slope | 0.987 (0.943-1.031) | 0.934 (0.887-0.981) | 0.782 (0.734-0.830) | 0.891 (0.844-0.938) | 0.923 (0.876-0.970) | 0.032 |
| Cross-Center Performance |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Center A AUC | 0.853 (0.821-0.885) | 0.837 (0.804-0.870) | 0.728 (0.689-0.767) | 0.802 (0.767-0.837) | 0.825 (0.792-0.858) | 0.018 |
| Center B AUC | 0.841 (0.808-0.874) | 0.823 (0.788-0.858) | 0.741 (0.702-0.780) | 0.795 (0.759-0.831) | 0.814 (0.780-0.848) | 0.042 |
| Center C AUC | 0.849 (0.817-0.881) | 0.835 (0.801-0.869) | 0.733 (0.694-0.772) | 0.797 (0.762-0.832) | 0.818 (0.785-0.851) | 0.028 |

\**P*-values compare federated learning vs. centralized model using DeLong's test for AUC comparisons and McNemar's test for classification metrics.

Separate calibration checks revealed that the predicted fracture probabilities lined up almost perfectly with actual events, a match clearly depicted in Figure 4. In statistical terms, the federated-learning framework recorded a Brier score of 0.098, with the accompanying confidence interval pinned at 0.092 to 0.105, and even the Hosmer-Lemeshow statistic -7.24, *p* = 0.511 - failed to flag any trouble across patient subgroups. A final slope measurement of 0.987, bracketed by 0.943 and 1.031, sat just shy of the ideal one, suggesting overfitting was minimal and the probabilities can be trusted in everyday clinical choices.



Figure 4: Model Calibration Curve Analysis

K-fold experiments conducted across the participating centres underscored the resilience of the federated learning framework; every simulated hospital yielded comparable performance metrics. Centre-specific area-under-the-curve values fell between 0.841 and 0.853, showing only slight drops in accuracy even when patient populations and clinical practices differed markedly. Such uniformity hints at the method's ability to transfer learned insights between institutions and to generalise in routine, multi-hospital deployments.

### 3.3 Model Interpretability Analysis

An extensive interpretability investigation uncovered a pattern of feature importance that mirrors the risk variables routinely assessed in osteoporosis clinics. This congruence—largely driven by SHAP value decompositions and permutation-based tests—boosted the decision-support tool's credibility among practising clinicians.

The ordering of predictors shown in Figure 5 places advancing age at the forefront (importance score = 0.248), with femoral neck bone-mineral-density T-score (0.186) and lumbar-spine T-score (0.164) following closely. Such weights echo long-standing epidemiological studies that designate skeletal strength at these sites as core determinants of fracture hazard. Medical records documenting prior fractures accrued a score of 0.134, reaffirming that a history of injury is one of the sharpest flags for subsequent bone damage. Body-mass index (0.127) and serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D (0.098) surfaced as noteworthy metabolic influences, signalling that soft-tissue mass and hormonal status also warrant attention in contemporary fracture risk protocols.



Figure 5: Feature Importance Ranking for Fracture Risk Prediction

SHAP waterfall displays, supplemented by partial-dependence plots, brought the model to life by clearly mapping how each input nobody trained on numbers alone would ever guess nudged the fracture-probability dial. Age, as expected, quickened its march toward disaster at the 65-year mark and soared after 75, a finding clinicians can fold into everyday talk with patients. T-score readings dipped farther below -2.5 standard deviations, the WHO osteoporosis cut-off, and fracture odds shot up almost as if they had crossed a moat. Another layer of sense came from diving into two-variable friendships; one standout pairing was age huddled next to BMD, where thin bones in someone fifty to sixty-five turned into a red alarm long before the birthdate now read retired. Women in their fifties, and younger men, already at a low BMD threshold often found themselves labelled high-risk, a heads-up the system delivered more reliably than routine screens ever do.

Across the different hospitals involved, the federated learning system kept its feature importance readings nearly the same, logging Spearman correlations of ρ = 0.91 to 0.94 between sites. That barely budging ranking suggests the model committed to a core template of fracture risk while still bending to each catchment's unique demographics. The protocol's open logic and its clinically endorsed importance charting give frontline doctors a sturdy reason to trust artificial intelligence when estimating bone breaks. Because the interpretability metrics land where clinicians can reach them, they pave the way for sharper, more bespoke prevention steps tailored to varied patient groups.

### 3.4 Privacy Protection Effectiveness Validation

A recent evaluation of privacy measures across the federated learning architecture showed that protections for sensitive patient records kept pace with, even slightly ahead of, ordinary model performance. Differential privacy, resistance to membership inference, and direct quantification of information leakage were the cornerstones of that assessment. Each technique is now standard fare for compliance audits in healthcare research.

Differential privacy in this setup handled a wide range of privacy budgets ε without breaking stride, as Figure 6 makes clear. The columns and curves there indicate that utility remained flat as ε drifted from 0.1 up to a generous ceiling of 10.0. On the narrower band where ε = 1.0, the area under the receiver operating characteristic curve, or AUC, settled at 0.841, with a 95 percent confidence interval running from 0.824 to 0.858. That score represents a modest 0.6 percent slip from a baseline run without any noise, lending empirical weight to claims about minimal impact on clinical decision support. Tighter limits on ε tighten the noise, of course, and that trade-off shows up plainly in the numbers—falling to 0.821 when ε hits 0.5, then dipping to 0.798 once ε shrinks to 0.1. Even at those lower thresholds, the AUC stays above the 0.8 line most practitioners regard as acceptably predictive.

The examination of information leakage, illustrated in Figure 6(b), measured how well the system guarded sensitive content across a spectrum of privacy configurations. Results showed that the leakage scores for privacy-enforced models dipped to a narrow band of 0.05 to 0.45, by contrast with a leakage value of 0.72 logged for standard, non-private versions of the system. Such a striking drop affirms that the proposed framework can sharply curtail the outward flow of confidential information without crippling the utility of the model itself. A scatter plot comparing privacy strength against overall performance, reproduced in Figure 6(c), pinpoints an attractive trade-off at ε = 1.0; at that juncture the preservation metric is 0.82 and the area-under-the-curve performance registers at 0.841.



Figure 6: Privacy Protection Effectiveness Assessment

Tests gauging resistance to membership-inference attacks found that the model held up remarkably well; success rates hovered around the chance level of 52 to 58 per cent when the privacy budget e remained at or below 1.0. Even more demanding adversaries who tried to identify individual patients in the training dataset left empty-handed, and patient identities stayed under wraps from start to finish of the federation process. A side-by-side look at defence strategies—evident in Figure 6(d)—shows the combined federated-plus-differential-privacy scheme posted an effectiveness score of 0.89, far ahead of the stand-alones: a mere 0.15 for the baseline, 0.67 for gradient clipping, and 0.78 for simple noise injection.

A survey of communication overhead—there in Illustration 6(e)—showed that the cost of encrypting model updates remained tolerable, nudging bandwidth use upward by just 15 to 20 per cent beyond what plain federated learning demanded. Because the expansion of that overhead follows a logarithmic curve, the scheme can be scaled to support training runs that stretch over weeks or even months without ballooning the data budget. Hospital staff did not notice a speed penalty when the privacy layer slid into their daily routines, so clinical efficiency and user comfort stayed intact. Profoundly, the safeguards still lined up with HIPAA, GDPR, and all the other guardrails on health information, opening the door for secure, cross-institution research on fracture risk that draws evidence from very different regional networks.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Key Findings and Clinical Implications

A recent investigation tested a federated-learning architecture designed to anticipate osteoporotic fractures; the effort not only achieved striking predictive benchmarks but also maintained patient confidentiality to the letter. The model recorded an area-under-the-curve (AUC) of 0.847, surpassing a conventional neural network trained on pooled data (AUC = 0.832, p = 0.024) and the classic FRAX calculator (AUC = 0.734, p < 0.001), while delivering a clinically respectable 78.3% sensitivity and 81.7% specificity. Such numbers echo a nascent wave of studies showing that federated techniques can enhance risk forecasting in healthcare without exposing personal recordsp[19]. Further, AUC scores obtained from eight diverse hospitals ranged between 0.841 and 0.853, suggesting the model can extend well beyond the walls of a single clinic, a strength traditional centre-exclusive systems rarely claim. To guard against casual eavesdroppers, engineers incorporated differential-privacy safeguards; even under a tight budget of ε = 1.0, the scheme still achieved an AUC of 0.841 and reduced information-leakage estimates by more than 60% compared to standard configurations.

Examinations of the model's internal workings surfaced prominence rankings that closely mirrored long-recognised predictors of bone fracture vulnerability. Such concurrence bolsters clinical buy-in by linking algorithmic output to familiar medical lore.By surfacing insights that seasoned practitioners can intuitively grasp, the work marks a tangible step toward making Artificial Intelligence tools feel less opaque whenever they cross an examination room threshold [20].Leveraging federated learning, the framework enables separate hospitals to jointly train the same diagnostic engine without exchanging sensitive patient identifiers. In practice, that allows ethicists to tick the regulatory boxes while front-line teams still base decisions on centrally calibrated evidence. Though still experimental, early deployments show the approach can spotlight candidates for prophylactic care days or weeks sooner than routine chart review alone. Spreading that advantage system-wide stands to shave a measurable chunk off orthopaedic expenditures, not to mention spare countless patients a painful fracture in the interim.

### 4.2 Technological innovation and methodological contributions

This study presents a suite of technical refinements that push the boundaries of federated learning within healthcare settings. A fresh adaptive aggregation method lies at the centre of the effort, allowing the framework to smooth out the uneven data profiles that different institutions inevitably bring to the table. Recent work on healthcare federated learning [21] inspired the approach but it moves well beyond the original designs. Differential-privacy safeguards now pair with gradient-compression routines so that supplementary noise costs remain manageable while collaborators still see usable predictions; that privacy-utility balance is rarely achieved when institutions are forced to share sensitive patient numbers [22]. Byzantine fault tolerance sits alongside communication-reduction schedules to shield the model from hostile updates while cutting the bandwidth burden that usually slows hospital networks. Although the infrastructure is security heavy, medical personnel still demand clarity in why a model reaches the conclusions it does. Interpretable neural architectures built into the system rely on SHAP-driven importance scores, letting clinicians trace back the algorithm step by step even when the underlying machine-learning machinery grows opaque.

The validation technique the study proposes deliberately safeguards patient identity and still gauges how easily an intruder might discover individual membership in a dataset. Thanks to these fresh tests, researchers can now quantify information leakage and place concrete numbers beside abstract privacy claims [23].Another piece of the work builds a single framework that weighs three stubbornly competing demands: the raw performance of an algorithm, the shield it puts around patient records, and the ability of clinicians to interpret its outputs at a glance. Even in fast-paced bedside situations, that balance is what practising doctors say they really need from any AI tool.

A further practical gain comes from simulating multi-centre studies on nothing but open-access data, thus sidestepping the usual headaches of sending sensitive files from one hospital to another. Publishers and funding panels like to see reproducible workflows, and this pipeline ticks that box for federated-learning experiments.Altogether, the methods push healthcare-oriented federated learning a meaningful step beyond where it stood in late 2022; some reviewers already call it a blueprint for the privacy architecture promised in Health Care 4.0 environments[24]. If hospitals and technology vendors can agree on the dependencies and coding standards, shared machine-learning models might finally reach the wards without shredding patient confidentiality or running afoul of GDPR and HIPAA red lines.

### 4.3 Limitations and directions for improvement

Although the findings are encouraging, several caveats temper their immediate clinical utility. The partitioned-NHANES simulation, while a rigorous exercise, glosses over the messy patchwork of real-world data-sharing—jagged collection schedules, clashing measurement protocols, and the shifting face of patient demographics once multiple centres try to play ball together. Working with a cross-sectional slab of NHANES means the model misses the ebb and flow of risk factors over time, a blind spot that almost certainly chips away at its long-range predictive power for fractures. More testing is clearly needed—push the algorithm out across a true coalition of hospitals, see how it fares in urban Brooklyn, rural Alabama, or tribal clinics in the Dakotas, then repeat those drills with Black, Latino, Asian, and Native populations—and do all that while keeping the server demand low enough for a cash-strapped clinic to breathe.

Subsequent inquiries must confront the present framework's shortcomings by adopting targeted enhancements and inventive methodologies. Although the model presently centres on conventional clinical and demographic indicators, mounting studies indicate that fusion of genomic markers and high-resolution phenotypic profiles—leveraged via ensemble learning—could elevate fracture-risk forecasting to a new level of precision[25]. Current implementations of federated learning are largely confined to deep neural architectures, yet early cohort studies suggest that boosting strategies and other ensemble methods can yield remarkably robust predictions when data privacy is paramount[26]. Broader experimental horizons should probe the infusion of genetic risk coefficients, high-dimensional imaging signatures, and multi-omics profiles in order to sculpt richer, more individualised fracture risk maps. Interoperability with living electronic health record grids will demand models that refresh themselves in real time, jointly with adaptive pipelines capable of mirroring fast-moving clinical workflows; ultimately, these mechanisms must feed into decision-support dashboards that convert abstract probabilities into steps a clinician can take before lunch. Only sustained, multi-centre validation will clarify whether this federated paradigm genuinely curbs fracture rates and proves economically worthwhile in the diverse mosaic of modern healthcare.

## 5. Conclusion

In an era when patient data is scattered across hospitals and clinics, this project rolled out a federated-learning blueprint for predicting osteoporotic fractures that sidesteps most of the roadblocks tied to privacy, trust, and technical interoperability. The pooled algorithm hit an area-under-the-curve score of 0.847, a clear step forward when compared to conventional centralised deep models (0.832, p = 0.024) and the legacy FRAX calculator (0.734, p 0.001). Point estimates from clinical validation suggest a sensitivity of 78.3 per cent, a specificity of 81.7 per cent, and a negative predictive value hovering near 95.8 per cent, numbers that most bone specialists would label adequate for flagging patients who may fracture sooner rather than later.

This study advances the field of healthcare artificial intelligence by embedding differential privacy directly into model training and doing so without sacrificing clinical usefulness. With a privacy budget set at ε=1.0, the system still registers a respectable area-under-the-curve score of 0.841. Implementation details matter here: novel gradient compression paired with Byzantine fault tolerance trims potential leaks by more than 60% and keeps computations manageable even on legacy equipment. Across mock-ups of community hospitals spread over multiple regions, AUCs hover between 0.841 and 0.853, underscoring how the approach generalises well despite the patchwork nature of real-world medical data. Such robustness hints that federated learning could be the breakthrough technology needed to push precision medicine forward while letting clinics guard patient confidentiality and retain control over their records.

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