

# AI Adoption and Sentiment Among Chinese Physicians: Benchmarking the “Digital Confidence Gap” in 2025

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## Background

China has undergone rapid digital-health transformation over the past decade, and physician engagement with digital tools has expanded substantially. In 2025, physicians spent an average of 3.1 hours per week interacting with medical AI, and more than 91% were already using AI for self-exploration, diagnosis, management, or patient interaction. Further more , the 2025 launch and rapid diffusion of DeepSeek created an opportunity to assess how Chinese physicians are adopting AI in real-world practice and whether their perceptions differ from broader public sentiment.

## Objective

To evaluate real-world AI adoption, usage patterns, and sentiment among Chinese physicians following the 2025 launch of DeepSeek, and to assess the “digital confidence gap” by benchmarking these findings against Chinese and global consumer trends.

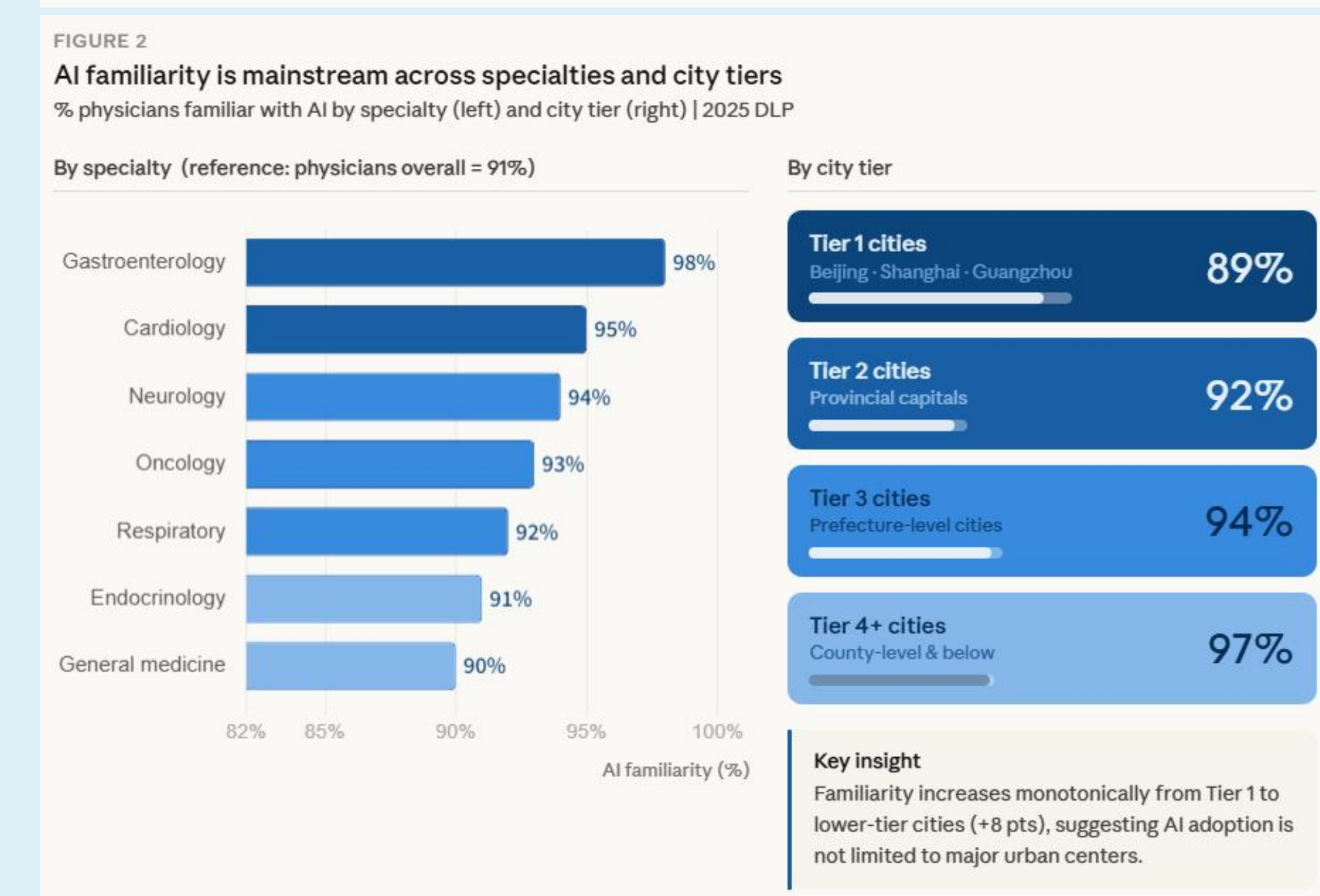
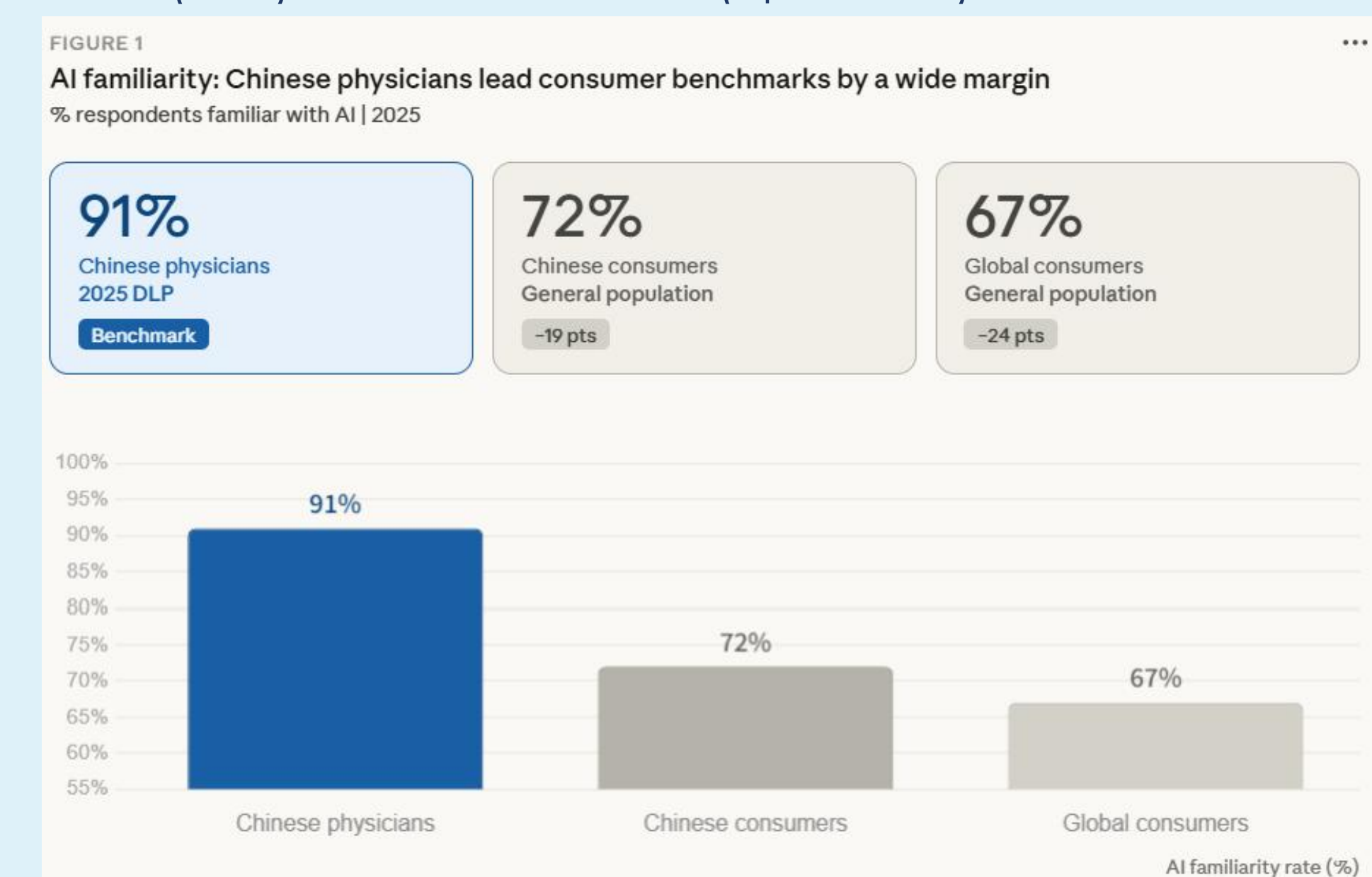
## Methods

This study analyzed data from the 2025 China Digital Life Physician (DLP) survey and the Ipsos AI Monitor 2024–2025. DLP is the largest HCP panel tracking physicians’ digital behavior in China and an annual research program established in 2012; the 2025 wave included 5,000 physicians across 360+ cities, 2,200+ hospitals, and 30+ departments. Benchmark data came from the multinational Ipsos AI Monitor, including 23,685 adults in 32 countries in 2024 and 23,216 adults in 30 countries in 2025. Descriptive statistics were used to compare AI familiarity, tool preference, and sentiment between Chinese physicians and consumer benchmarks. The 2025 DLP panel demonstrates wide specialty coverage across 30+ physician groups, supporting robust analysis of digital behavior patterns across diverse clinical settings.

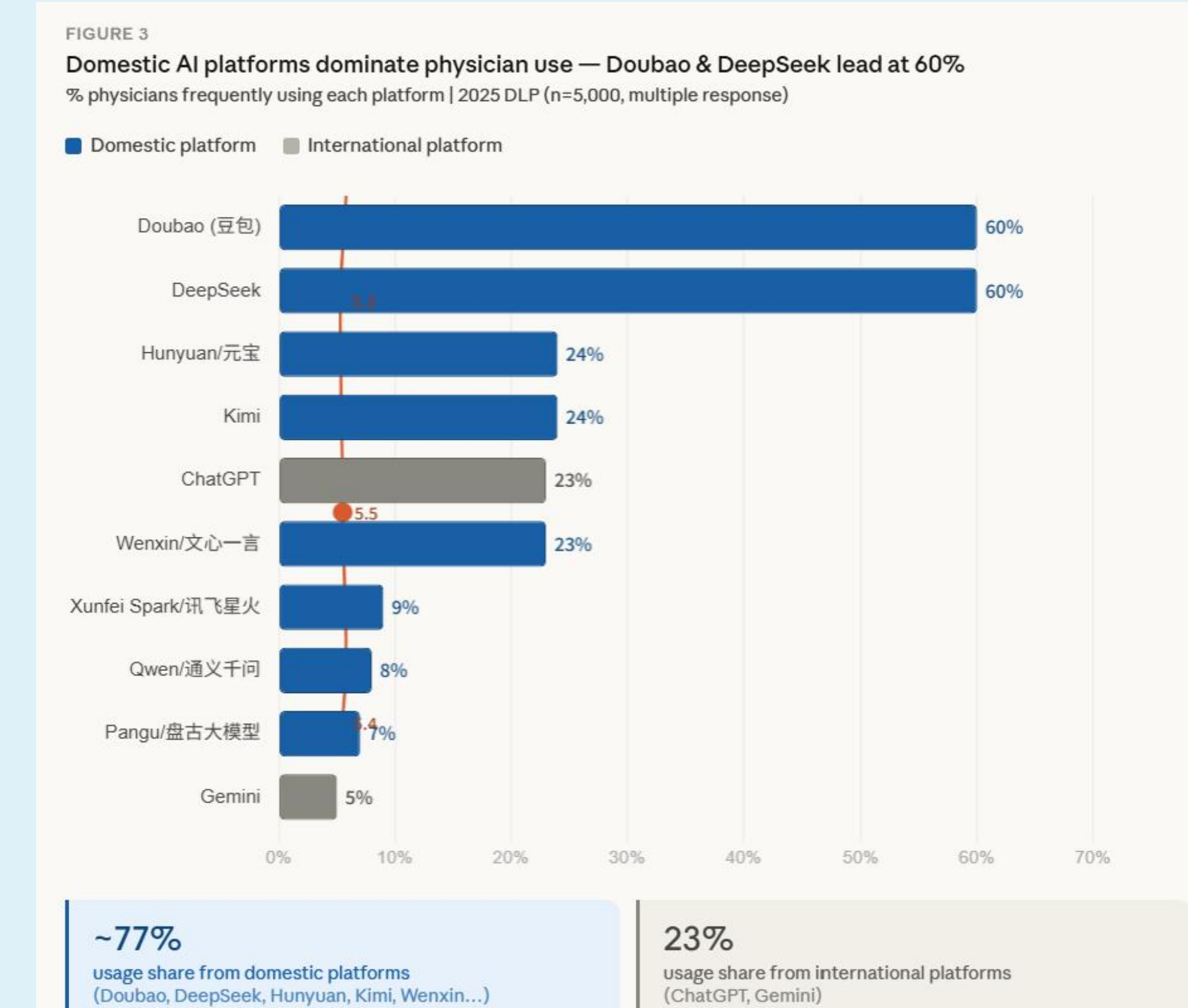


## Results

AI familiarity among Chinese physicians reached 91% in 2025, clearly exceeding Chinese consumers (72%) and global consumers (67%). Adoption was mainstream across specialties and city tiers, with particularly high familiarity in gastroenterology (98%), cardiology (95%), and neurology (94%), and rates increasing from Tier-1 cities (89%) to lower-tier cities (up to 97%).



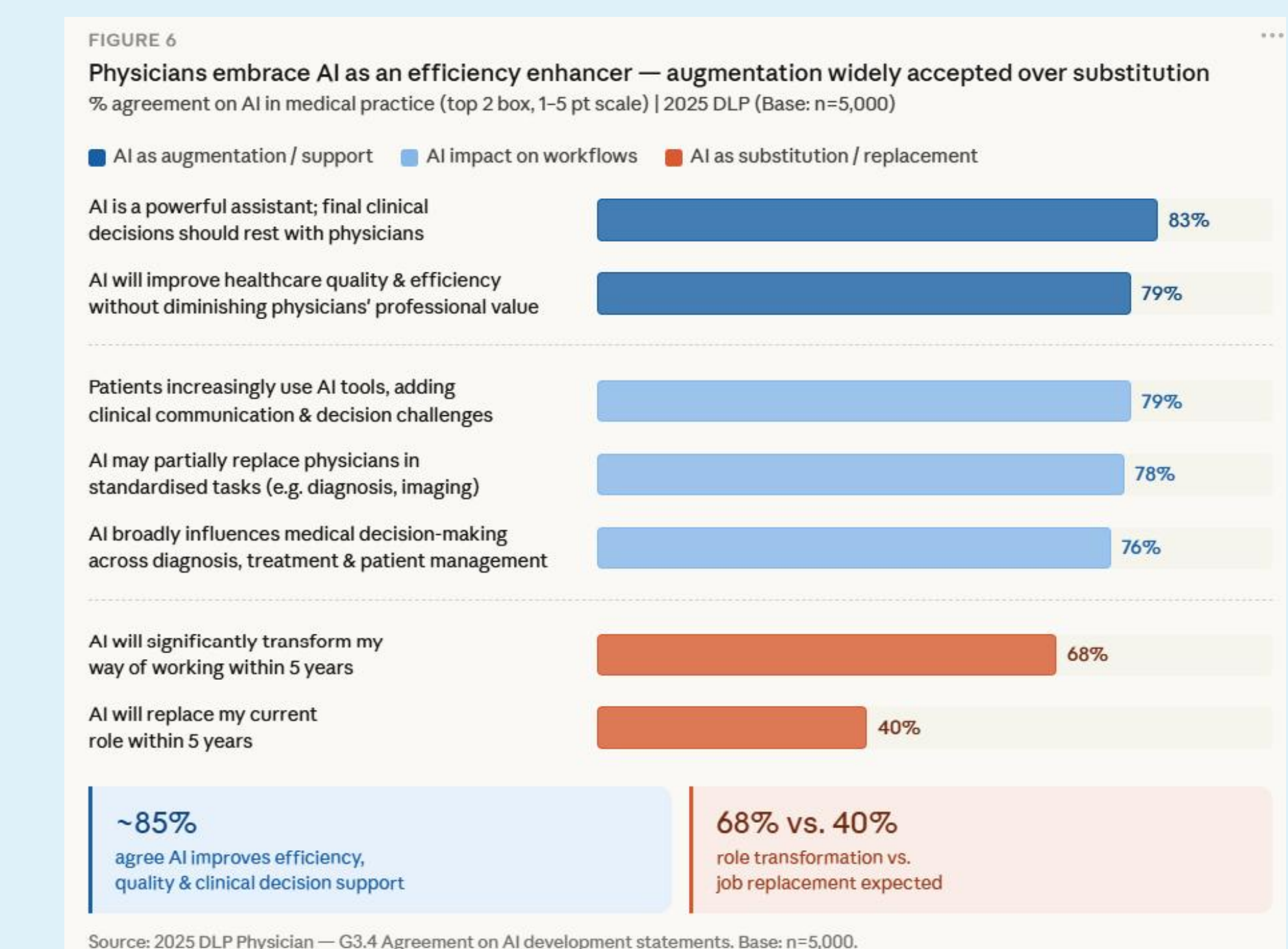
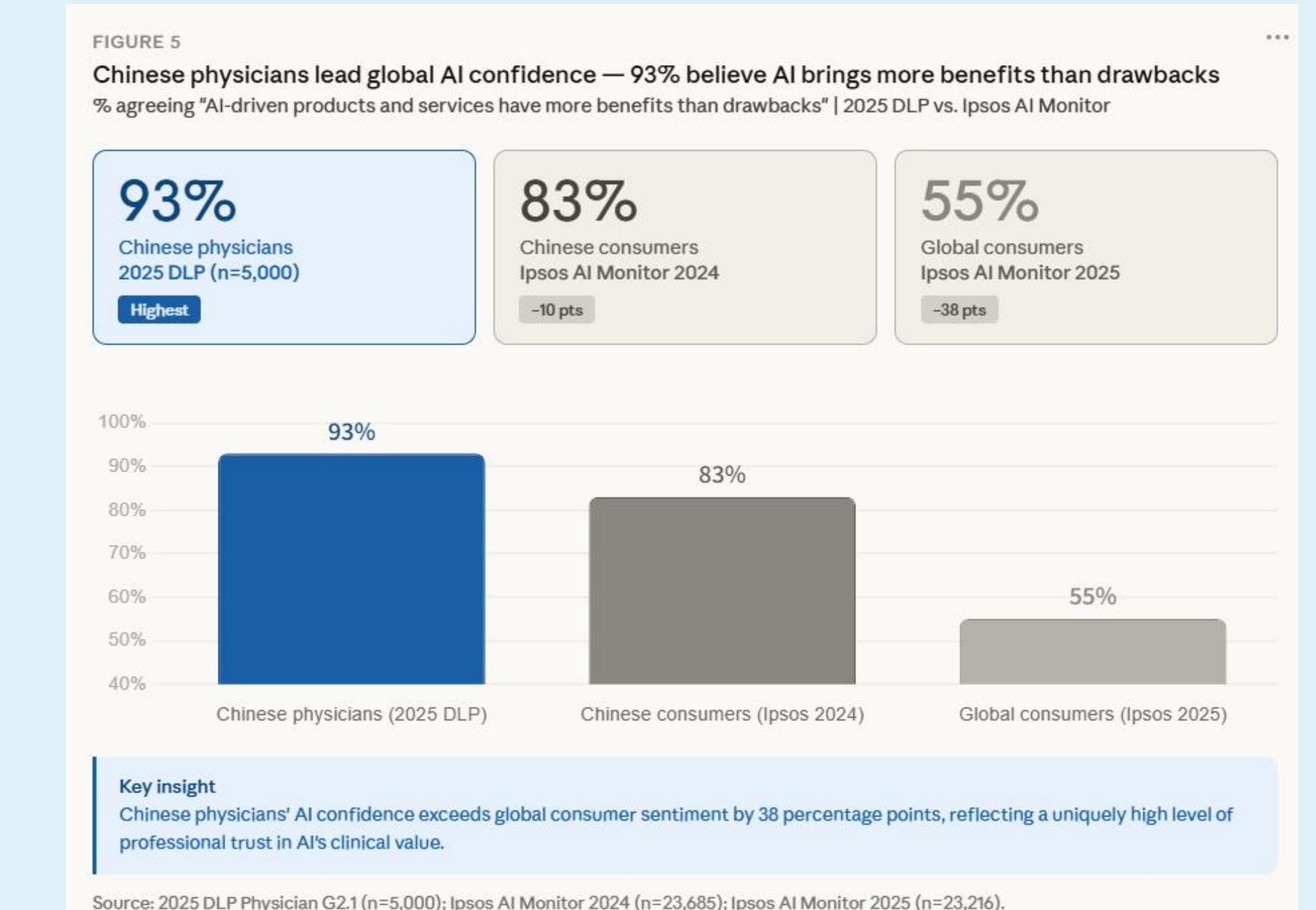
Domestic AI platforms dominated physician use. More than 90% of physicians had tried AI tools or functions, and domestic tools such as Doubao and DeepSeek were the most frequently used, together reaching about 60% usage, compared with 23% for international platforms such as ChatGPT.



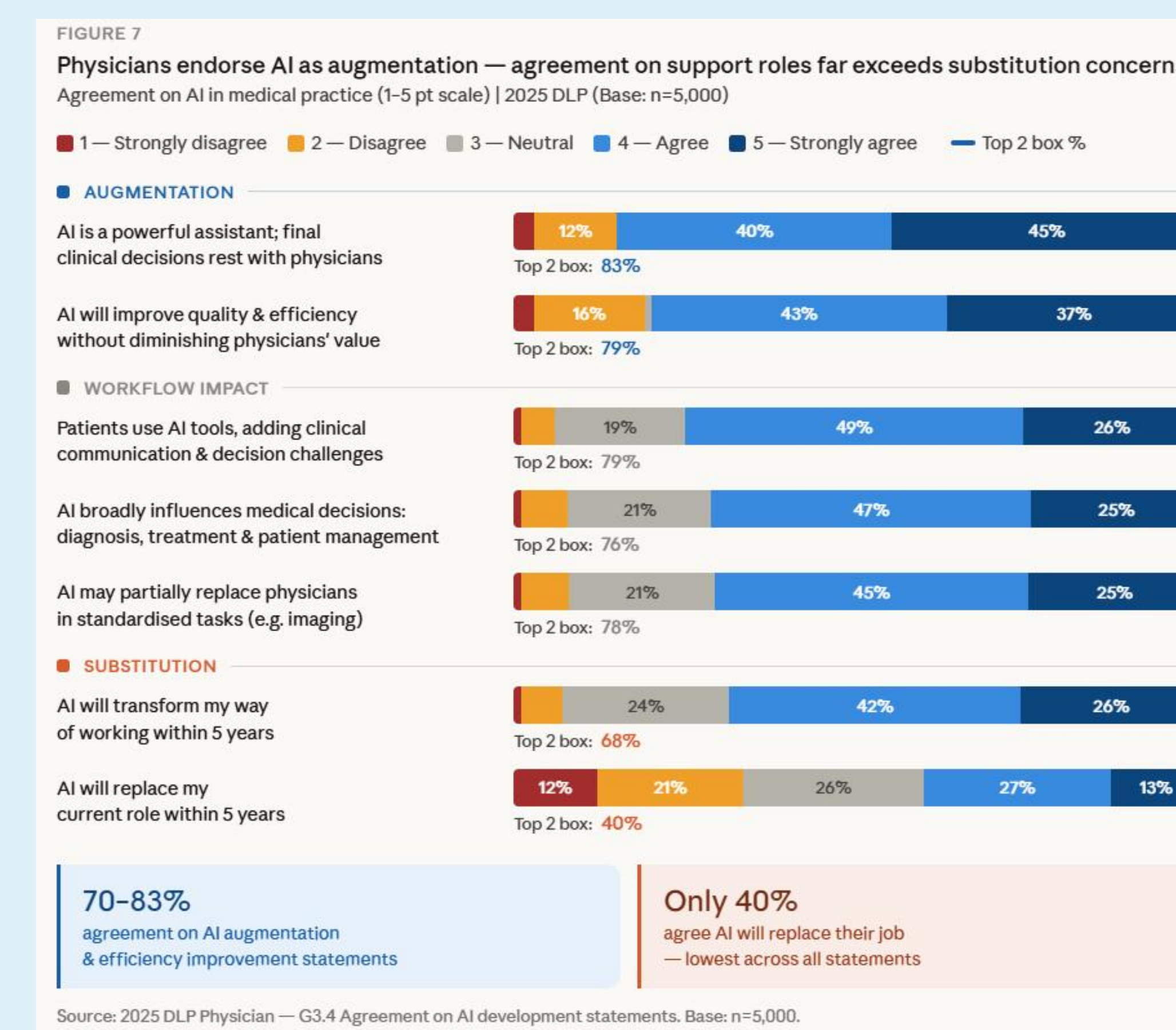
AI trial was near-universal (91%), yet 56% of physicians used AI solely for information retrieval, with only 35% achieving deeper workflow integration.



Physician sentiment toward AI was strongly positive. 93% of Chinese physicians believed AI-driven products and services bring more benefits than drawbacks, compared with 83% of Chinese consumers and 55% of global consumers. Around 85% of physicians agreed that AI improves efficiency, quality, and clinical decision support. Looking ahead, 68% expected AI to significantly transform physicians’ roles within five years, while 40% anticipated potential job replacement, suggesting that augmentation remains more widely accepted than substitution.



Chinese physicians strongly endorsed AI as an enabler rather than a replacement — across all seven statements, agreement on augmentation roles (70–83%) consistently outpaced willingness to accept job substitution (40%), underscoring a professional consensus that AI should support, not supplant, clinical expertise.



## Conclusions

Chinese physicians demonstrate a clear 'digital-first' mindset, with high levels of AI familiarity, strong optimism, and a marked preference for domestic platforms. However, current usage is still concentrated in information retrieval and has not yet fully evolved into deep clinical integration.

The gap between Chinese physicians' strong confidence in AI and the more cautious attitudes seen among global consumers highlights the unusually accelerated and professionally embedded nature of China's digital-health environment.

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## Reference

- Li A, Wang D, Zhou Y. AI Adoption and Sentiment Among Chinese Physicians: Benchmarking the “Digital Confidence Gap” in 2025.
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