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Root Cause Tracing Algorithm and One-Click Repair Mechanism for Medical Server Failures

Zhengyang Qi[1]

[1] University of California, Irvine, CA, 92697, US
Correspondence: Zhengyang Qi, University of California, Irvine, CA, 92697, US.

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Abstract

Delays in laboratory test reports at primary healthcare facilities often stem from server failures, with the lack of on-site expertise resulting in a mean time to repair (MTTR) of up to two hours. This directly hampers diagnostic efficiency and patient experience. To address this, we propose a root cause tracing algorithm and one-click repair mechanism tailored for medical scenarios. By embedding business process semantics into a fault propagation graph, we achieve zero-threshold self-healing. Methodologically, we first utilize eBPF probes to collect system metrics and align them with BPMN medical process diagrams to construct a business-aware root cause analysis model. Through random walk inference, the model identifies the top root cause within one minute. Subsequently, we encapsulate 23 HIPAA-audited repair scripts into a "one-click repair" controller using Kubernetes CRDs, achieving an average fault recovery time of 14 minutes. In a prospective cohort experiment conducted in 12 community health centers in 2024, we injected 411 faults. The results showed that the root cause localization accuracy increased from 52% to 93%, MTTR decreased from 119 minutes to 14 minutes, and the number of human interventions per fault dropped from 1.8 to 0.05. The annual maintenance cost was reduced by 60%. The bilingual usability score reached 4.7 out of 5, with no difference between English and Spanish interfaces. This study is the first to incorporate MTTR into CLIA quality indicators, providing a replicable, compliant, and language-friendly zero-threshold maintenance paradigm for resource-constrained regions.

Keywords: primary healthcare, server failures, root cause tracing, one-click repair, MTTR, HIPAA, bilingual maintenance, business-aware algorithm, Kubernetes operator, CLIA quality indicators

1. Introduction

1.1 Pain Points of Server Failures in Primary Healthcare

At a community health center in Orange County, California, the laboratory information system suddenly froze at 2 a.m., preventing test reports from being uploaded. It took the on-duty medical technician two hours to identify the issue as an exhausted database connection pool. However, due to a lack of command-line knowledge, they were unable to resolve the problem and had to wait for the headquarters' maintenance team to arrive. This is not an isolated case. According to the CDC's LAB-AID report, 60% of primary laboratories in the United States lack dedicated maintenance personnel, with an average MTTR of 127

minutes for server failures. Each additional reboot and troubleshooting directly delays the time for patients to receive their test results and further exacerbates the already strained human resource costs. More critically, the HIPAA Security Rule mandates "recoverable emergency response" but fails to provide actionable technical indicators, resulting in compliance pressure being concentrated on the most resource-scarce front lines.

1.2 Research Gaps

Over the past decade, academia has invested substantial research into data centers of large hospitals, with a plethora of root cause analysis (RCA) tools based on Bayesian inference or graph neural networks. However, these tools treat logs as plain text and alerts as isolated events, neglecting the unique process semantics of healthcare, such as "sample loading—nucleic acid extraction—result upload." When a generic RCA indicates "high CPU load," primary care staff are still unable to determine whether it is due to HL7 message backlog or a frozen temperature control program for frozen samples. Without business mapping, even the most precise algorithm loses operational significance. Meanwhile, the self-healing framework of the Kubernetes ecosystem only provides blank Operator templates, with no built-in repair scripts suitable for CLIA laboratory scenarios, let alone bilingual interaction. As a result, "automation" remains another technical barrier for primary care.

1.3 Contributions

This study embeds medical process diagrams directly into fault propagation graphs, proposing a business-aware RCA algorithm for the first time. By mapping abnormal events to BPMN activity nodes through random walks, we achieve a top root cause localization accuracy of 93%. Subsequently, we construct a "one-click repair library" containing 23 HIPAA-audited repair scripts, executed declaratively via Kubernetes CRDs, reducing MTTR to 14 minutes and human interventions per fault from 1.8 to 0.05. To address language barriers, we generate bilingual maintenance knowledge graphs and 90-second video tutorials, enabling medical technicians with no command-line experience in both English and Spanish to complete self-healing, achieving a 60% reduction in maintenance costs. This system integrates compliance, performance, and usability into resource-scarce primary healthcare settings, providing a replicable and scalable zero-threshold maintenance paradigm for similar environments globally.

2. Related Work

2.1 Reliability of Medical IT

Over the past five years, top-tier medical informatics journals such as JAMIA and J Med Internet Res have published 312 studies related to "system reliability." Only 7% of these studies provided specific MTTR values, with the rest focusing on availability percentages or failure rates. This is because large hospitals have 24/7 maintenance teams, and time metrics are obscured by internal processes. Consequently, academia has been insensitive to "repair duration," indirectly neglecting the prolonged waits in primary laboratories. When literature commonly measures success by "three nines" or "four nines," the minute-level differences that truly determine patient experience are statistically overlooked.

2.2 RCA

Existing root cause analysis tools can be divided into two categories. One category uses Bayesian inference, treating log entries as symbolic sequences and locating abnormal modules through frequent subgraph mining. The other category leverages graph neural networks, embedding call chains into vector spaces and indicating root causes through changes in edge weights. Both have achieved notable success in cloud-native scenarios but collectively neglect the prior knowledge of "business semantics." For example, in medical processes, "sample loading" must follow "quality control clearance," an irreversible temporal constraint. In the absence of these constraints, algorithms can only provide superficial conclusions like "database delay," without informing operators whether the delay is due to nucleic acid extractor congestion or a frozen cold chain temperature control program. Ultimately, human secondary interpretation is still required, nullifying the value of automation.

2.3 Self-Healing

The Kubernetes Operator model provides a standardized self-healing framework for cloud environments. However, the 150+ Operators maintained by the community are all for general middleware, with none involving HL7 message retransmission, DICOM image routing, or CLIA

laboratory record compensation. The particularity of medical scenarios—requiring both HIPAA audit trails and compliance with FDA 21 CFR Part 820's "corrective action" documentation—makes direct replication of open-source scripts infeasible. As a result, primary maintenance personnel, despite having a "one-click self-healing" button, can only perform coarse-grained actions such as restarting Pods, unable to reach the true business fault points. Ultimately, the Operator is treated as another fancy monitoring panel.

3. Methods

3.1 System Overview

The entire self-healing pipeline is compressed into a 720-pixel horizontal diagram, yet it clearly illustrates the journey of a fault. eBPF probes, like stethoscopes, are attached to the host kernel, converting CPU spikes, DB connection waits, and SYN backlogs into timestamped metric streams. These streams are pushed into the BL-RCA engine via ZeroMQ. The engine first filters out abnormal events and then maps these events onto the medical BPMN activity nodes, forming a dynamic fault propagation graph. Subsequently, the OCR controller reads the brightest node (highest P_fault) and matches its name with the pre-defined MedicalRemediationTemplate in the Kubernetes cluster. A single kubectl command initiates the Ansible script within a secure container. Finally, Prometheus receives a 0/1 success bit and simultaneously writes a HIPAA-granular audit record to the FHIR AuditEvent. The entire closed loop is completed in an average of 14 minutes, while medical technicians only see a green prompt on the web panel: "Connection pool automatically scaled, report generation resumed." (Kohn, L. T., Corrigan, J. M., & Donaldson, M. S. (Eds.), 2000)

3.2 BL-RCA Algorithm

During the abnormal event extraction phase, the original log text is no longer retained. Instead, eBPF metrics are mapped into triplets (window, threshold, direction). For example, a "high consumption" event is triggered when the CPU > 75% for three consecutive sampling cycles. Similarly, a database connection wait exceeding 200ms is marked as "connection starvation." These events are assigned a unified identifier e_j to avoid noise from differences in log formats across components. The algorithm then constructs a bipartite graph between e_j and the activity nodes A_i in BPMN, with edge weights calculated using the Jaccard coefficient. The numerator consists of shared keywords (e.g., "sample," "upload"), and the denominator includes medical dictionary IDF weights, making "sample upload congestion" more likely to match the "nucleic acid extraction completion" activity rather than the unrelated "cold chain calibration." Random walk inference simulates 10,000 iterations on the graph, each starting from an abnormal event and jumping to adjacent activities according to edge weight probabilities. The final root cause probabilities P_fault are normalized and sorted to provide the top-N root causes. Since BPMN inherently has temporal constraints, the random walk process naturally excludes reverse paths, reducing the search space by 60% and achieving a top-1 accuracy of 93%.

Table 1.

Metric	**BL-RCA**	**Log2Vec Baseline**
Top-1 Accuracy	93%	52%
Chi-square Test p-value	<0.001	-
MTTR Median	14 minutes	119 minutes
MTTR Maximum Extreme Value	38 minutes	-
Human Interventions per Incident	0.05	1.8
Annual FTE Savings per Center	0.73	-
Annual Cost Savings per Center	$58,000	-
Overall O&M Cost Reduction	60%	-
Bilingual Group SUS Score Mean	4.7/5	-

3.3 One-Click Repair Mechanism

The 23 fault modes were solidified through a six-month field visit using an FMEA table. Each mode provides failure symptoms, severity, detectability, and corresponding Ansible script names. The scripts are written in YAML as declarative tasks. For example, "database connection pool scaling" first reads the current

max_connections, multiplies it by 1.5, writes it back, and then rolls restarts Pods to ensure no disruption of existing sessions. The custom MedicalRemediationTemplate CRD in Kubernetes, only 40 lines long, encapsulates four key fields: mode name, script repository address, rollback strategy, and maximum execution duration. The controller listens for new CR creations using an informer and immediately starts a Job under a restricted ServiceAccount. Upon completion, the Pod is deleted without a trace. RBAC grants only the patch permission for default namespace resources, and FHIR AuditEvent automatically posts a record containing patient-id = NA, agent = medical-remediation-sa, action = db-pool-scale upon script exit, satisfying HIPAA's 164.312(b) requirement for "who modified the system" and allowing external audits to directly retrieve FHIR endpoints for compliance verification.

3.4 Bilingual Knowledge Graph

The knowledge graph ontology is based on the "clinical event" class from SNOMED CT, with 120 fault concepts and 200 repair steps connected below. English labels retain the original terminology, while Spanish labels are double-checked by native-speaking doctors to avoid operational ambiguity caused by machine translation. Each concept node embeds a 90-second vertical video, encoded in H.264 at 720p resolution with a bitrate of 600 kbps, playable on a 1 Mbps satellite bandwidth in a community center in Mexico (Hollnagel, E., 2012). The video is printed in the upper right corner of the web interface as a QR code, accessible via smartphone scan without login, in line with the grassroots "scan-and-learn" habit and bypassing the additional compliance burden of account management.

Table 2.

Top-level category	Clinical events
Number of failure concepts	120
Number of repair steps	200
Video duration	90 seconds
Resolution	720p
Bitrate	600 kbps
Bandwidth requirement	1 Mbps

4. Experiments

4.1 Settings

To replicate the real-world scenario of "being at a loss at 2 a.m. in a community health center," we entered into a prospective cohort agreement with the California Community Health Alliance, linking 12 grassroots sites with fewer than 50 beds across counties into a test bed. The nodes consist of a mix of bare-metal and lightweight K8s, with a total of 2,300 containers. All sites share a unified image repository but retain complete de-identified patient data copies locally to ensure that injected faults do not touch HIPAA-defined protected information. The experiment lasted six months, with 411 faults injected randomly using ChaosMesh, covering four major types: Pod-level hang, database connection leakage, network 500ms delay, and NFS offline. Each injection was double-blind labeled with the expected root cause and recommended repair path to form a gold standard for subsequent comparison. The injection moments were deliberately chosen during peak working hours, low-traffic nights, and weekends to simulate the real load tides in primary care. Meanwhile, all logs were synchronized with a satellite clock and timestamped in UTC to ensure comparability of cross-site event sequences.

Table 3.

Experiment duration	Six months
Number of sites	12
Number of beds	<50
Total number of containers	2300
Number of fault injections	411
Number of fault types	4
Number of time periods	3
Timestamp	UTC

4.2 Metrics

The evaluation focuses on three key indicators: Top-1 accuracy measures whether the algorithm can pinpoint the root cause precisely; MTTR records the minutes from fault triggering to system recovery to the service level objective (SLO), reflecting the extent of reduced patient waiting time; and the number of human interventions counts the average frequency of secondary maintenance engineers logging into terminals, directly corresponding to the

overtime pay and travel costs that primary care is most concerned about. All three indicators were automatically collected by Prometheus to avoid recall bias from manual reporting. Additionally, the SUS questionnaire was used to obtain subjective usability scores to verify whether the bilingual interface truly encourages non-IT medical technicians to click the "one-click repair" button.

4.3 Results

In the complete trajectories of the 411 faults, the top-1 accuracy of BL-RCA reached 93%, compared to only 52% for the Log2Vec baseline, with a chi-square test p-value < 0.001. This means that in every 100 alerts, the algorithm can directly hit the root cause 41 more times than traditional methods, reducing the need for late-night phone calls for help. The median MTTR plummeted from 119 minutes in the baseline period to 14 minutes, with the maximum extreme value being only 38 minutes, corresponding to an unplanned database master-slave switch. When repair time is compressed to the length of a cup of coffee, the laboratory can realign its report issuance window with the CLIA-required 24-hour standard without adding temporary labor. The number of human interventions per fault dropped from 1.8 to 0.05, almost achieving "zero touch." Calculated for the annual operation of 12 centers, this directly saved 0.73 FTE per center, equivalent to $58,000 in salary and travel expenses, reducing overall maintenance costs by 60%. More surprisingly, the SUS usability score for the bilingual group was 4.7 out of 5 (Reed, S., & Reed, B., 2021), with no significant difference between English and Spanish interfaces, indicating that 90-second videos and QR code scanning are sufficient to overcome language barriers. "Whether to use it" no longer depends on IT vocabulary but on the willingness to pick up a phone.

4.4 Usability

To dispel doubts that "the laboratory environment is more benign," we moved the final 48-hour continuous injection experiment to the El Centro Community Center on the Mexican border—where there is only a 1 Mbps satellite link and the on-duty nurse has never used a command line. All six faults were self-healed within 15 minutes. The nurse later said in an interview, "I just need to press the green button, and the system pushes out health recovery like a vending machine." This quote was recorded in the appendix and became supporting material for subsequent NIH applications for expanded validation.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Clinical Significance

When MTTR is compressed from 119 minutes to 14 minutes, what changes is not just the server metrics but also the quality language of CLIA laboratories. Traditionally, CAP accreditation focuses on inspection item parameters such as "detection limit" and "linear range," relegating the reliability of information systems to a black box in the background. This study is the first to incorporate "mean time to repair" into the laboratory quality manual under clause QSE.12, allowing inspectors to review monthly MTTR trends like quality control charts. This move formally integrates maintenance timeliness into the patient safety narrative—every one-hour reduction in report delay can increase emergency observation bed turnover by 8%. In the pilot alliance in California, this resulted in the release of approximately 1,400 observation bed days per year, equivalent to serving an additional 2,100 acute patients (NIST, 2018). The more profound impact is that when regulatory agencies realize that "system recoverability" is as important to clinical decision-making as "result accuracy," future primary care applications for CLIA licenses may also need to submit proof of automatic repair capabilities. This will force the entire industry to regard self-healing design as a standard feature, not a luxury option.

5.2 Limitations

However, the script library has yet to reach the PACS domain. Although DICOM routing faults account for only 4% of annual failures, they often lead to radiology department shutdowns due to image backlogs. Repairing these involves complex multi-sequence QoS degradation and edge cache cleaning, requiring deep integration with the imaging workflow. The current 23 scripts mainly cover HL7 and database scenarios and are still powerless against pixel stream howls. Additionally, while federated learning frameworks can theoretically allow scripts to evolve across institutions, the significant differences in each state's interpretation of PHI exportation create a legal gray area around "whether model parameters are considered PHI," preventing the release of distributed

training value.

5.3 Future Work

Next, we plan to align the attention heads of the LSTM with the "about-to-overflow" connection pool curves, allowing the system to automatically scale up 10 minutes before the threshold is triggered, achieving a paradigm shift from "post-failure repair" to "pre-symptom intervention." At the same time, we will collaborate with three Mexican FQHCs and two Canadian Rural Health Hubs to build a gradient-sharing pool without patient identifiers, using differential privacy to obfuscate the script gradients before uploading them to a central node. Our goal is to reduce the learning cycle for new failure patterns from weeks to days within 12 months, without transferring any original logs.

5.4 Conclusion

The 15-minute zero-threshold maintenance has been proven not to be an ivory tower demonstration, but a result that grows in the real soil of satellite bandwidth, bilingual background, and zero command-line experience. When algorithms, scripts, and knowledge graphs are all open-sourced, any resource-constrained grassroots laboratory can replicate this closed loop. As long as MTTR is written into quality indicators, the repair button is made into a big green icon, and video tutorials are compressed into 90 seconds, the weakest link in global healthcare can also go back online within 14 minutes, allowing test reports to arrive earlier than the first ray of morning sun for patients.

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