

Atrius Health and IBM Watson Health Forge Agreement to Bring Cognitive Insights to Primary Care Physicians and Their Patients

ORLANDO, Fla., Feb. 20, 2017 [PRNewswire/](#) -- Atrius Health and IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) Watson Health today entered into an agreement to develop a cloud based service designed to improve the physician-patient experience. By providing a holistic view of the multiple influences on an individual's health, including social determinants, Watson Cognitive Insights could be designed to support shared decision making between physicians and patients. Atrius Health is an innovative nonprofit healthcare organization with 875 physicians caring for 675,000 patients in eastern Massachusetts.

According to a paper published by Health Affairs¹, shared decision making, whereby physicians and their patients make healthcare decisions together using the best clinical evidence available, has been linked to numerous benefits for patients, clinicians, and the health care system. This includes increased patient knowledge, less anxiety over the care process, improved health outcomes, reductions in unwarranted variation in care and costs, and greater alignment of care with patients' values. Despite these benefits, many physicians report challenges incorporating shared decision making technology into their direct patient interactions.

The new solution could be designed to address these challenges by integrating within the physician's workflow in the electronic health record system. It could summarize key cognitive insights about a patient's health status, assemble a de-identified cohort of people similar to the individual, and describe the outcomes of those people under various treatment options.

"Atrius Health is committed to increasing the joy in the practice of medicine for our clinicians and staff," said Steve Strongwater, MD, President and CEO of Atrius Health. "Working with IBM Watson Health offers a unique opportunity to help our Atrius Health clinicians make greater use of the mountains of digitalized information generated daily through our care of patients. The unique capabilities of Watson Cognitive Insights will help our primary care clinicians increase both effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, we anticipate this partnership will increase our ability to reliably identify and close care gaps to improve the quality and safety of ambulatory clinical care."

By teaming with IBM Watson Health on the development of this new solution, Atrius Health aims to ensure that powerful analytics are applied at the point-of-care to support real world physician/patient dialogue.

"Watson's natural language processing can read and understand clinical notes in the electronic health record. When combined with analytics and other advanced technologies, it is then possible to extract critical insights about an individual's health and responses to interventions," said Paul Tang, MD, MS, Vice President and Chief Health Transformation Officer for IBM Watson Health. "Armed with comprehensive information about the individual, and insights about the outcomes of similar people, physicians will be in a better position to personalize the care plan for each person."

About Atrius Health

Atrius Health, an innovative nonprofit healthcare leader, delivers an effective system of connected care for more than 675,000 adult and pediatric patients in eastern and central Massachusetts. Atrius Health's 30 medical practices, with more than 50 specialties and 875 physicians, work together with the home health and hospice services of its VNA Care subsidiary and in close collaboration with hospital partners, community specialists and skilled nursing facilities. Atrius Health provides high-quality, patient-centered, coordinated care to every patient it serves. Establishing a solid foundation of knowledge, understanding and trust with each of its patients, Atrius Health enriches their health and enhances their lives. Learn more about Atrius Health at www.atriushealth.org.

About IBM Watson Health

Watson is the first commercially available cognitive computing capability representing a new era in computing. The system,

delivered through the cloud, analyzes high volumes of data, understands complex questions posed in natural language, and proposes evidence-based answers. Watson continuously learns, gaining in value and knowledge over time, from previous interactions. In April 2015, the company launched IBM Watson Health and the Watson Health Core cloud platform (now Watson Platform for Health). The new unit will help improve the ability of doctors, researchers and insurers to innovate by surfacing insights from the massive amount of personal health data being created and shared daily. The Watson Platform for Health can mask patient identities and allow for information to be shared and combined with a dynamic and constantly growing aggregated view of clinical, research and social health data. For more information on IBM Watson, visit: ibm.com/watson. For more information on IBM Watson Health, visit: ibm.com/watsonhealth.

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¹ France Légaré and Holly O. Witteman Shared Decision Making: Examining Key Elements And Barriers To Adoption Into Routine Clinical Practice
Health Affairs 32, no.2 (2013):276-284

SOURCE IBM
