

Manipal Hospitals announces national launch of IBM Watson for Oncology

Bangalore: Manipal Hospitals today announced IBM Watson for Oncology, a cognitive computing platform, is now in use by oncologists at six locations in the Manipal Hospitals network to provide information and insights to physicians to help them identify personalized, evidence-based cancer care options across India. Manipal oncologists can access IBM Watson for Oncology for patients with breast, colorectal and lung cancer that are registered with a Manipal facility pan-India including: Goa covering West India, Jaipur covering North, Vijayawada covering East, South and rest of the country covered by the three Manipal hospitals in Bangalore.

Manipal Hospitals further announced the introduction of an expert second opinion cancer care consulting service. Individuals across India who have received a cancer diagnosis but are not a Manipal patient can access a Manipal oncologist for an expert second opinion tele-consult within 72 hours by logging onto the Manipal online consult portal and/or by sending an SMS with the subject line 'WATSON' to #56363, from the 5th of August 2016.

Watson for Oncology, a cognitive computing platform trained by Memorial Sloan-Kettering, analyses data to provide information and insights regarding evidence-based treatment options, to help oncologists provide cancer patients with individualized healthcare. On December 2015, Manipal Hospitals announced its intent to adopt Watson for Oncology, making this the first deployment of Watson in India and the first engagement of its kind as the country advances its efforts to transform healthcare.

“The introduction of Watson for Oncology will be a game changer for cancer patients across the country. With Watson, Manipal oncologists can make an informed treatment decisions for patients based on insights derived from the individuals’ unique health status, the latest medical research and other relevant data,” said Dr. Ajay Bakshi, MD & CEO, Manipal Hospitals. “With the launch of the Manipal expert opinion service, we are also open to partnering with other hospitals and medical consultants who seek to benefit from Watson for Oncology or individuals who have received a cancer diagnosis and wish to seek the advice of a Manipal doctor.”

Rob Merkel, Vice President, Oncology and Genomics for IBM Watson Health commented, “IBMs intent is for Watson to become an essential tool for oncologists in India -- providing doctors with clinically relevant and actionable insights to help inform the doctors’ decisions. In doing so, there is the potential for Manipal to raise the level of cancer care throughout the country. We are honored to be a part of this major transformation.”

Oncologists in India and across the globe are struggling to keep up with the large volume of research, medical records and clinical trials. Further, doctors face an increasing battle to stay up to date about best practices in treatment and care management.

Watson scales vital knowledge and provides insights and information to help oncologists as they consider treatment options for their patients. Using natural language, clinicians using Watson for Oncology will be able to have information to allow them to explore treatment options, and gather evidence specific to a patients' individual health needs. Watson ranks identified treatment options and provides links to supporting evidence for each option to help oncologists as they consider treatment options for their patient.

Watson for Oncology draws from an impressive corpus of information, and, to date, more than 300 medical journals, more than 200 textbooks, and nearly 15 million pages of text. Watson for Oncology also supplies for consideration supporting evidence in the form of administration information, as well as information regarding the different drug options. Watson's machine learning capability means it is continuously learning over time, and doctors have access to peer reviewed studies, clinical guidelines and expert perspectives.