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Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

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or incomplete diagnosis. These statistics, coupled with a data explosion of medical information that is doubling every five years, represent an unprecedented opportunity for the healthcare industry and next-generation cognitive computing systems to combine forces in new ways to improve how medicine is taught, practiced, and paid for.

For more than a year, IBM has partnered separately with WellPoint and Memorial Sloan Kettering to train Watson in the areas of oncology and utilization management. During this time, clinicians and technology experts spent thousands of hours “teaching” Watson how to process, analyze, and interpret the meaning of complex clinical information using natural language processing all with the goal of helping to improve healthcare quality and efficiency.

“IBM’s work with WellPoint and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center represents a landmark collaboration in how technology and evidence-based medicine can transform the way in which healthcare is practiced,” said Manoj Saxena, IBM General Manager, Watson Solutions. “These breakthrough capabilities bring forward the first in a series of Watson-based technologies, which exemplifies the value of applying big data and analytics and cognitive computing to tackle the industries most pressing challenges.”

## Advancing Oncology through Evidence-Based Medicine

To date, Watson has ingested more than 600,000-plus pieces of medical evidence, and two million pages of text from 42 medical journals and clinical trials in the area of oncology research. Watson has the power to sift through 1.5 million patient records representing decades of cancer treatment history, such as medical records and patient outcomes, and provide to physicians evidence-based treatment options all in a matter of seconds.

In less than a year, Memorial Sloan Kettering has immersed Watson in the complexities of cancer and the explosion of genetic research, which has set the stage for changing care practices for many cancer patients with highly specialized treatments based on their personal genetic tumor type.

Starting with 1,500 [lung cancer](#) cases, Memorial Sloan Kettering clinicians and analysts are training Watson to extract and interpret physician notes, lab results, and clinical research, while sharing their profound expertise and experiences in treating hundreds of thousands of patients with cancer.

“It can take years for the latest developments in oncology to reach all practice settings. The combination of transformational technologies found in Watson with our cancer analytics and decision-making process has the potential to revolutionize the accessibility of information for the treatment of cancer in communities across the country and around the world,” said [Craig B. Thompson, MD](#), President and CEO of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. “Ultimately, we expect this comprehensive, evidence-based approach will profoundly enhance cancer care by accelerating the dissemination of practice-changing research at an unprecedented pace.”

The Maine Center for Cancer Medicine and WESTMED Medical Group are the first two early adopters of the capability. Their oncologists will begin testing the product and providing feedback to WellPoint, IBM, and Memorial Sloan Kettering to improve usability.

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## Speeding Utilization Management to Improve Patient Care

Throughout WellPoint’s utilization management pilot, Watson absorbed more than 25,000 test case scenarios and 1,500 real-life cases, and gained the ability to interpret the meaning of and analyze queries in the context of complex medical data and human and natural language, including doctors’ notes, patient records, medical annotations, and clinical feedback. In addition, more than 14,700 hours of hands-on training was spent by nurses who meticulously trained Watson. Watson continues to learn while on the job, much like a medical resident, while working with the WellPoint nurses who originally conducted its training.

Watson started processing common medical procedure requests by providers in December for members in WellPoint-affiliated health plans, and this service was expanded to include five provider offices in the Midwest. Watson will serve as a powerful tool to accelerate the review process between patients’ physicians and their health plans.

“The healthcare industry must drive transformation through innovation, including harnessing the latest technology that will ultimately benefit the healthcare consumer,” said Lori Beer, WellPoint’s executive vice president of Specialty Businesses and Information Technology. “We believe that WellPoint’s data, knowledge, and extensive provider network, combined with the IBM Watson technology and Memorial Sloan Kettering’s oncologic expertise, can drive this transformation.”

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## Watson-Powered Health Innovations

As a result, IBM, Memorial Sloan Kettering, and WellPoint are introducing the first commercial products based on Watson. These innovations represent a breakthrough in how medical professionals can apply advances in analytics and natural language processing to “big data,” combined with the clinical knowledge base, including genomic data, in order to create evidence-based decision support systems. These Watson-based systems are designed to assist doctors, researchers, medical centers, and insurance carriers, and ultimately enhance the quality and speed of care.

The new products include the Interactive Care Insights for Oncology, powered by Watson, in collaboration with IBM, Memorial Sloan Kettering, and WellPoint and the WellPoint Interactive Care Guide and Interactive Care Reviewer, powered by Watson, designed for utilization management in collaboration with WellPoint and IBM.

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## New Interactive Care Insights for Oncology

The cognitive systems use insights gleaned from the deep experience of Memorial Sloan Kettering clinicians to provide individualized treatment options based on a patient's medical information and the synthesis of a vast array of updated and vetted treatment guidelines and published research.

A first-of-its-kind Watson-based advisor, available through the cloud, that is expected to assist medical professionals and researchers by helping to identify individualized treatment options for patients with cancer, starting with lung cancer.

Provides users with a detailed record of the data and information used to reach the treatment options.

Oncologists located anywhere can remotely access detailed treatment options based on updated research that will help them decide how best to care for an individual patient.

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## New WellPoint Interactive Care Guide and Interactive Care Reviewer

Delivers the first Watson-based cognitive computing system anticipated to streamline the review processes between patients' physicians and their health plans, potentially speeding approvals from utilization management professionals, reducing waste, and helping ensure evidence-based care is provided.

Expected to accelerate accepted testing and treatment by shortening pre-authorization approval time, which means that patients are moving forward with the first crucial step toward treatment more quickly.

Analyzes treatment requests and matches them to WellPoint's medical policies and clinical guidelines to present consistent, evidence-based responses for clinical staff to review, in the anticipation of providing faster, better-informed decisions about a patient's care.

WellPoint has deployed Interactive Care Reviewer to a select number of providers in the Midwest, and believes that more than 1,600 providers will be using the product by the end of the year.

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## Watson: Then and Now

The IBM Watson system gained fame by beating human contestants on the television quiz show *Jeopardy!* almost two years ago. Since that time, Watson has evolved from first-of-a-kind status to a commercial cognitive computing system, gaining a 240 percent improvement in system performance and a reduction in the system's physical requirements by 75 percent, and can now be run on a single Power 750 server.

The transformational technology, named after IBM founder Thomas J. Watson, was developed in IBM's Research Labs. Using advances in natural language processing and analytics, the Watson technology can process information similar to the way people think, representing a significant shift in the ability for organizations to quickly analyze, understand, and respond to vast amounts of Big Data. The ability to use Watson to answer complex questions posed in natural language with speed, accuracy, and confidence

has enormous potential to improve decision making across a variety of industries from healthcare, to retail, telecommunications, and financial services.

## About IBM

For more information on IBM Watson, please visit [www.ibmwatson.com](http://www.ibmwatson.com).

To join the social discussion about Watson at Rensselaer include the hashtag #ibmwatson.

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## About WellPoint, Inc.

At WellPoint, we believe there is an important connection between our members' health and well-being — and the value we bring our customers and shareholders. So each day we work to improve the health of our members and their communities. And, we can make a real difference since we have more than 36 million people in our affiliated health plans, and nearly 67 million people served through our subsidiaries. As an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, WellPoint serves members as the Blue Cross licensee for California; the Blue Cross and Blue Shield licensee for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area), Nevada, New Hampshire, New York (as the Blue Cross Blue Shield licensee in 10 New York City metropolitan and surrounding counties and as the Blue Cross or Blue Cross Blue Shield licensee in selected upstate counties only), Ohio, Virginia (excluding the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C.), and Wisconsin. In a majority of these service areas, WellPoint's plans do business as Anthem Blue Cross, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia and Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield, or Empire Blue Cross (in the New York service areas). WellPoint also serves customers throughout the country as UniCare and in certain markets through our Amerigroup and CareMore subsidiaries. Our 1-800 CONTACTS, Inc. subsidiary offers customers online sales of contact lenses, eyeglasses and other ocular products. Additional information about WellPoint is available at [www.wellpoint.com](http://www.wellpoint.com).

## SAFE HARBOR STATEMENT UNDER THE PRIVATE SECURITIES LITIGATION REFORM ACT OF 1995

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