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A First in Cancer Care: IBM Watson Helps Oncologists at Jupiter Medical Center

Watson, the cognitive computing system that beat the world's best *Jeopardy* players in 2011, is now being used to help make decisions about cancer treatments in our community. Jupiter Medical Center was the first U.S. community medical center to adopt Watson for Oncology, and its cancer experts are using the technology to help deliver personalized, evidence-based treatment.

"It's like getting a second opinion from the world's best brain," explains Abraham Schwarzberg, M.D., chief of of

Oncology at Jupiter Medical Center. "Watson is a cognitive computing system that is programmed to figure out the optimal regimen for an individual's cancer treatment."

✖ There are an estimated 1.7 million new American cancer cases annually, with 125,000 in Florida alone. As health care providers seek to enable data-driven, evidence-based cancer care, an explosion of medical information has created both challenges and opportunities. The vast amount of medical information – 50,000 annual oncology papers and an expected doubling of information every 73 days – has outpaced physician capacity to internalize it.

Dr. Schwarzberg acknowledges that a big issue for oncologists is keeping up with cancer literature daily. Now, Jupiter Medical Center's cancer experts have a tool that puts the most up-to-date information and treatment recommendations at their fingertips.

Watson can:

- Analyze an individual patient's medical information to help better understand unique attributes
- Read the expanding body of curated literature from medical journals and textbooks
- Provide personalized, evidence-based treatments options which are reviewed and evaluated by Jupiter Medical Center's cancer experts

"With Watson's ability to harness all of the world's knowledge on cancer care – in any language – I can sit with a patient and say, this is what the literature recommends today for your particular situation," Dr. Schwarzberg said. "It gives our team of doctors great confidence that we have identified the most up-to-date treatment regimen available."

Watson ranks treatment options, linking to peer-reviewed studies and clinical guidelines. Its machine-learning capability means it continuously collects information, gaining value and knowledge over time.

"We are committed to pioneering new approaches," said Steven

Seeley, interim president and chief executive officer of Jupiter Medical Center. "Watson for Oncology is part of our investment in creating a world-class cancer program and we are proud to be the first U.S. community hospital to arm our clinical team with this cutting-edge technology."

Although a powerful tool, Watson is not meant to replace physicians. "Watson does not tell the physician what to do, it's a knowledgeable second opinion," explains Nancy Taft, M.D., FACS, medical director of the breast program at Jupiter Medical Center. "Having additional input helps me make the most informed decisions and gives the patient added comfort that they're being offered the optimal treatment."

Dr. Schwarzberg adds, "You still need that bond and trust between a cancer patient and their doctor or treatment team. At the end of the day, the patient and their doctor make the ultimate decision about how to fight cancer."

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