Cognitive Computing Used to Fight Physician Burnout

Healthcare leaders continue to find ways to address the problem of physician burnout as this impacts on patient care. At the Cleveland Clinic, cognitive computing is now used to reduce clinician workloads as well as simplify workflows and increase efficiency.

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Through a collaboration with IBM, the Cleveland Clinic is expanding the use of a cognitive computing system (Watson Health) across its clinical and administrative operations.

The rise of cognitive computing, where artificial intelligence systems receive training to assist clinicians in synthesising and navigating huge amounts of data, offers potential for relieving some of the stress physicians face, according to William Morris, MD, associate chief information officer at the Cleveland Clinic,

IBM's Watson Health mimics the way the human brain works through understanding, reasoning and learning, translating information into knowledge that can help drive more informed decision-making. Dr. Morris was quick to point out that his organisation's partnership with IBM Watson aims to "augment the clinical thought process, not to replace it."

This is an important distinction for physicians leery of having their independence supplanted by technology, as IBM CEO Ginni Rometty noted in her keynote speech at the 2017 HIMSS conference in February.

During the conference, Atrius Health and IBM Watson announced an agreement to develop a cloud-based service which would be integrated into the physician's workflow in the EHR, summarising key cognitive insights about a patient's health status, assembling a de-identified cohort of patients similar to the individual, and describing the outcomes of those patients under various treatment options.

According to Joe Kimura, MD, chief medical officer of Atrius Health, technology is a critical tool for physicians navigating an increasingly unwieldy amount of medical information. "You feel guilty if you're not processing all the data to make good decisions for your patients."

Source: Fierce Healthcare
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