

American Heart Association, IBM Watson Health and Welltok Team Up to Transform Heart Health

AHA to Infuse Cognitive Computing, Personalization and Science-Based Standards into New Workplace Health Offering

NEW YORK CITY - 01 Feb 2016: Today, the first day of American Heart Month, the American Heart Association (AHA) announced plans to develop a first of its kind workplace health solution that leverages the cognitive computing power of IBM Watson. In the first application of Watson to cardiovascular disease, AHA, IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)), and Welltok will create a new offering that combines AHA's science-based metrics and health assessments with cognitive analytics, delivered on Welltok's health optimization platform. The effort is intended to help alleviate the burden of cardiovascular diseases, which affect more than 85 million Americans today.

Dallas, TX -- American Heart Association Chief Medical Officer for Prevention Eduardo Sanchez, MD, MPH, checks out Welltok's health optimization app, which will serve as the platform for a new workplace health program in a new collaboration between AHA, IBM Watson Health and Welltok. On the first day of American Heart Month, the three organizations announced plans to develop and introduce the first workplace health program infused with AHA's science-based metrics and the cognitive computing power of Watson. The offering will be designed to build a culture of health and encourage individuals to make heart healthy choices. Cardiovascular disease is one of the most prevalent and costly chronic conditions, accounting for 1 in 3 deaths in the U.S. and more than \$312.6 billion in annual health spending and lost productivity.

The program will help assess both the employer's workplace health environment, as well as employee health based on AHA metrics. Core to the offering is a new [Workplace Health Achievement Index](#), which AHA also launched today. The Index uses best practices to measure and rank corporate health initiatives, assessing companies on their workplace health culture. The Index is a result of efforts by the AHA's [CEO Roundtable](#), an organization of some of America's largest employers dedicated to workplace health. They have served as a learning laboratory to develop, test and refine the Index. In the new offering being developed, Watson will uncover cognitive insights by analyzing data from the Index to provide guidance on how an employer can support employee health, such as informing how corporations design, tailor and deliver health benefits and health promotion programs that maximize the health of the workforce.

Using Welltok's platform online or via mobile, an individual employee could opt to complete AHA's My Life Check questionnaire, which measures Life's Simple 7, the key cardiovascular health indicators—not smoking, eating healthy, being physically active, achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, managing blood pressure, controlling cholesterol, and reducing blood sugar. Welltok leverages consumer insights gained from the questionnaire and data collected via wearable fitness trackers, wireless-enabled scales and blood pressure cuffs to provide personalized recommendations to help the individual make healthy choices that could reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease.

“With Life's Simple 7 and the Workplace Health Achievement Index, we've presented a science-based blueprint for healthy living and corporate well-being,” said Eduardo Sanchez, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer for Prevention, American Heart Association. “With this program, individuals and their employers will be able to benefit from a personalized, cognitive solution designed to help improve heart health and reduce healthcare costs. Our hope is that we can set a new standard for continuous quality improvement in workplace health.”

IBM CEO Ginni Rometty is a member of the AHA CEO Roundtable and IBM will integrate the offering into the company's employee wellness strategy. The offering will tap Watson's natural language processing, deep question and answer capability and similarity analytics, and Watson will be trained on evidence-based heart health goals and measures in order to recommend specific ways employers can create heart healthy environments and engage with their employees.

“The new era of cognitive computing has the potential to help transform personal health and well-being, and that's why we are eager to see this offering in action to support the health and wellness of the workforce,” said Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP, Chief Health Officer, IBM Watson Health. “This is the first time Watson is taking on heart health, and we look forward to working with more members of the AHA CEO Roundtable who serve as models for best in class corporate heart health initiatives.”

The global burden of heart disease threatens a multinational workforce, accounting for 1 in 3 deaths and more

than \$312.6 billion in annual health spending and lost productivity. Poor diet, lack of regular physical activity and other major risk factors for heart disease and stroke are responsible for at least 25 percent of employers' healthcare costs.

A new study by AHA and Nielsen found that employees who feel encouraged by senior leadership to participate in workplace health programs are approximately twice as likely to eat healthy, and 69 percent report that workplace health initiatives have a strong impact on job satisfaction.

AHA research has shown that attaining a high Life's Simple 7 score can help reduce risk for heart disease, stroke, cancer and many other health problems. People who reach ideal health for all seven metrics ("ideal cardiovascular health") by age 50 may have significantly lower lifetime risk of heart disease and stroke.

"By putting this innovative program in the hands of consumers, we are guiding them at a personal level to maintain, and even improve their health status," said Jeff Margolis, chairman and CEO of Welltok. "We look forward to working with IBM and AHA, as well as the nation's largest employers, to optimize the health of employees across the U.S. and proactively address the human and financial toll of heart disease."

Welltok provides a HIPAA-compliant platform that allows employees to participate in health-related activities while protecting their privacy. Data from the Workplace Health Achievement Index and the application for Life's Simple 7 will be de-identified and stored in the Watson Health Cloud.

For more information on the AHA's continuous quality improvement in the workplace and many additional resources, visit www.heart.org/workplacehealth.

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About the AHA's CEO Roundtable

Americans overestimate their own health, and this puts them at greater risk for heart disease and other serious illness. Right now, the U.S. spends more on health care than any other country, yet we are not a healthy nation. Prevention is important to changing this dynamic. America's employers can help. That's why 26 CEOs from some of America's largest corporations and organizations have formed the CEO Roundtable, dedicated to creating a workplace culture in which healthy choices are the default choices.

The AHA's CEO Roundtable members include co-chairmen Henry Kravis, KKR, and Terry Lundgren, Macy's, Inc.; and Nancy Brown, American Heart Association; Mitch Barns, Nielsen; Bruce Broussard, Humana; David Calhoun, Blackstone; Cathy Engelbert, Deloitte LLP; Eric J. Foss, Aramark; Ken Frazier, Merck; James P. Gorman, Morgan Stanley; Alex Gorsky, Johnson & Johnson; Milton Johnson, HCA; Andrew Liveris, The Dow Chemical Company; Mike Mahoney, Boston Scientific; Larry Merlo, CVS Health; Brian Moynihan, Bank of America; George Paz, Express Scripts; Stefano Pessina, Walgreens Boots

Alliance; Ginni Rometty, IBM; Horacio D. Rozanski, Booz Allen Hamilton; Pietro Satriano, US Foods; Randall Stephenson, AT&T; Bernard J. Tyson, Kaiser Permanente; Al Walker, Anadarko; David West, Big Heart Pet Brands; and Eric C. Wiseman, VF Corporation.

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America’s No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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 Cloud platform. 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 Health Cloud allows this information to be de-identified, 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.

Check out the [IBM Watson press kit](#). Join the conversation at #ibmwatson and #watsonhealth. Follow Watson on [Facebook](#) and see Watson on [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#).

About Welltok

Welltok Inc., developer of the healthcare industry’s first consumer enterprise platform, is transforming the way population health managers guide and incentivize consumers to optimize their health. The CaféWell Health Optimization Platform organizes the growing spectrum of health improvement and condition management resources, obtains unparalleled consumer insights through advanced analytics, and leverages cognitive computing to create personalized, adaptive health itineraries. Health plans and other sponsors now have an efficient and effective way to engage, activate and reward consumers, which drives greater healthcare value across all types of populations, from kids to seniors.
