



A Symbol of Excellence

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ICON and IBM to Revolutionise Clinical Trial Feasibility, Patient Recruitment and Study Start-up Timelines

ICON applies IBM Watson Clinical Trial Matching to Oncology Clinical Trials

DUBLIN--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- **ICON plc, (NASDAQ:ICLR)** a global provider of drug development solutions and services to the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries, today announced that it is working with IBM (NYSE:IBM) to help reduce the time and costs of drug development, while also offering patients enhanced quality of care by connecting them to relevant clinical trials. ICON will tap Watson's cognitive computing power to help automate the cumbersome process of identifying patients who meet the criteria for a clinical trial, and to analyse protocols to assess trial feasibility and identify optimal trial sites.

Initially, ICON is applying [Watson Clinical Trial Matching](#) to its breast, lung, colon and rectal cancer trials. The solution enables ICON to advise sponsors how many patients match their trial criteria, where they are located and how they will recruit them. [IBM's Watson Health Cloud](#) will facilitate access to de-identified patient data, including 50 million patient records contained in the data set from Explorys, which IBM acquired in April. At the same time, ICON enhances IBM Watson's capabilities by providing expertise into clinical trial protocols and clinical operations.

The cost and time involved in clinical trials is considerable. More than \$1.3B is spent on patient recruitment by drug developers each year and yet fewer than 5% of cancer patients participate in a clinical trial. It also typically takes 6-12 months to start up a global phase III drug trial and another 12 months to enroll the required number of patients.

Commenting on the announcement, ICON's Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Steve Cutler, said: "Recruiting the required number of patients for clinical trials is a constant challenge for our customers and can represent more than 30% of total study costs. By applying IBM Watson to our clinical trials, we have the potential to revolutionise clinical trial feasibility, patient recruitment and study start-up timelines which will help our customers take significant time and cost from their development programmes. Together with IBM, we are also providing a better and faster way to connect patients with clinical trials that are most relevant to them. Today's announcement is an excellent example of disruptive innovation and represents ICON and IBM's shared vision for using industry-leading technologies and real-world data sets to improve clinical development."

"Clinical trials are crucial in the drug and treatment development process, but when it comes to identifying appropriate trial candidates, there are significant data challenges, which can contribute to delays for bringing new therapies to market," said Sean Hogan, Vice President and General Manager, IBM Healthcare. "Through cognitive computing and cloud-based data, our goal is to help our clients accelerate the time it takes to complete clinical trials and reach conclusive trial results."

About IBM Watson: Pioneering a New Era of Computing

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 new insights from the massive amount of personal health data being created 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.

About ICON plc

ICON plc is a global provider of drug development solutions and services to the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries. The company specialises in the strategic development, management and analysis of programs that support clinical development - from compound selection to Phase I-IV clinical studies. With headquarters in Dublin, Ireland, ICON currently, operates from 81 locations in 37 countries and has approximately 11,300 employees.

Further information is available at www.iconplc.com/innovation

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Learn more about this story at <http://asmarterplanet.com/blog/2015/09/using-data-analytics-speed-clinical-drug-trials.html>

This press release contains forward-looking statements. These statements are based on management's current expectations and information currently available, including current economic and industry conditions. These statements are not guarantees of future performance or actual results, and actual results, developments and business decisions may differ from those stated in this press release. The forward-looking statements are subject to future events, risks, uncertainties and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those projected in the statements, including, but not limited to, the ability to enter into new contracts, maintain client relationships, manage the opening of new offices and offering of new services, the integration of new business mergers and acquisitions, as well as economic and global market conditions and other risks and uncertainties detailed from time to time in SEC reports filed by ICON, all of which are difficult to predict and some of which are beyond our control. For these reasons, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements when making investment decisions. The word "expected" and variations of such words and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are only as of the date they are made and we do not undertake any obligation to update publicly any forward-looking statement, either as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. More information about the risks and uncertainties relating to these forward-looking statements may be found in SEC reports filed by ICON, including its Form 20-F, F-1, S-8 and F-3, which are available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

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