

IBM Watson Health NAM Commitment Statement

Our mission: IBM Watson Health aspires to improve lives and give hope by delivering innovation to address the world's most pressing health challenges through data and cognitive insights.

IBM Watson Health recognizes that physician burnout is one of the most pressing health challenges of our generation and has been identified as a public health crisis.

Physician burnout has multiple root causes, including:

- **Technology** – Deployment of the Electronic Health Record (EHR) has brought multiple benefits by making patient information more available and legible, providing clinical guidance to physicians at the point of care, and offering new modalities for patient-physician communication. It has also changed clinical workflows, burdened physicians with significant data entry demands, removed physician focus from the patient relationship, and damaged work-life balance.
- **Regulatory** – Introduction of the ACA and MACRA have added to healthcare system reporting requirements, placing new performance expectations on physicians, some of which are contradictory to, or hampered by, other regulations. Specialty societies have added maintenance of certification requirements that require physician investments of time and money that seem unwarranted to many physicians.
- **Financial** – The efforts to control the total cost of healthcare have included reducing reimbursements, increased scrutiny of clinical decision making, and shifting risk from payers to providers.
- **Societal changes** – These include increasing cultural and linguistic diversity, an aging population with increased complex chronic disease burden, and changing expectations about physicians' roles in managing challenges such as the opioid crisis.

IBM Watson Health is committed to address these and other causes of physician burnout by:

- Raising awareness of physician burnout and effective approaches to reduce burnout through research, presentations, and publications.
- Supporting physician wellness efforts, particularly in partnership with professional societies and healthcare focused not for profits.
- Supporting healthcare providers in redesigning clinical workflows to remove barriers that hinder a physician's ability to focus on the patient and inefficiencies that have negatively impacted physician work-life balance.