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IBM's foray into Chinese healthcare sector

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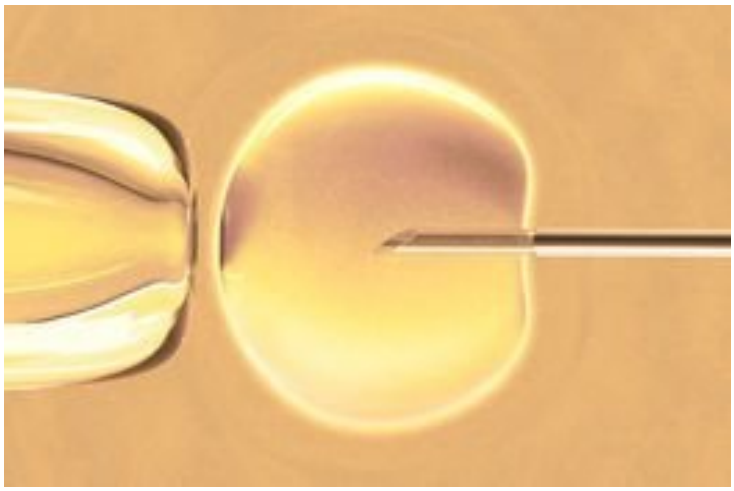

Singapore: In a bid to intensify its fight against cancer, China's Hangzhou Cognitive Care has teamed up with IBM to bring Watson super computer to 21 hospitals in the country. The super computer is all set to play a crucial role in a new multi-year program being unveiled in China. This is IBM's first partnership in China's healthcare sector.

IBM said, in a statement that this particular computing platform specializes in synthesizing tremendous amounts of data in order to provide physicians with a summary of patient records and numerous pieces of medical literature to help find the best individualized treatments for certain patients.

The project will initially be launched in 21 hospitals where it will be used in oncology to provide speedy diagnosis as well as treatment. IBM's initiative was encouraged by the fact that there is an oncology research problem in the country which has more than 1.4 billion people. IBM has been establishing partnerships related to health in different areas. One such partnership is the joint initiative with the American Diabetes Association to use cognitive computing in research and clinical data. The company also uses Watson's genomic analysis to offer personalized cancer treatment in 14 hospitals in the US.

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Hangzhou, a healthcare services organization, will assist IBM in matters like translation support because the insights delivered by Watson will initially only be available in English. Sales and customer support will also fall under Hangzhou's purview as well.
"Watson has the power to transform how doctors battle cancer in China and around the world, providing physicians with insights regarding treatment options that help them customize therapeutic recommendations specific to each individual, based on a patient's specific needs," said Mr Zhen Tu, CEO of Hangzhou Cognitive Care, in a statement.

Nearly 4.3 new million cancer cases have been registered last year in China according to statistics. Cancer is the leading cause of death among China's population of 1.4 billion. In 2015 alone there were 4.3 million new cancer cases and more than 2.8 million cancer deaths in China. It is estimated that the country is experiencing approximately 12,000 new cancer diagnoses each day.1 Further, doctors face an increasing battle to stay up to date about best practices in treatment given the

high volume of new and emerging oncology research.