

\$3.8 Million Awarded to Researchers at University of Utah Health and Intermountain Healthcare

National Cancer Institute Grant Funds Advanced Cancer Screening Tool

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, August 30, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Researchers from the [University of Utah Health](#), [Intermountain Healthcare](#), and Huntsman Cancer Institute received a grant for \$3.8 Million from the National Cancer Institute to develop an advanced cancer screening tool. The new tool will couple electronic health record technologies with advanced clinical decision support (CDS) tools to screen for several types of cancer and identify and manage high risk patients within primary care settings and the broader care delivery system.

“It is crucial that primary care physicians who are the frontline of care identify patients who are at high risk of developing cancer,” says grant co-investigator Scott Narus, PhD, Medical Informatics Director and Chief Clinical Systems Architect for Intermountain Healthcare. “Early diagnosis and screening of cancer greatly increases the chances for successful treatment.”

Increased scientific evidence supports individualizing cancer screening based on risk to better predict probabilities of cancer development. Informatics researchers are challenged by significant barriers to implementation of an effective clinical decision support tool because:

- Some electronic health record (EHR) systems have limited clinical decision support capabilities
- There is minimal sharing of clinical decision support rules among healthcare organizations
- Existing clinical decision support systems rely on closed architectures

U of U Health, Intermountain, and Huntsman Cancer institute researchers are determined to meet these challenges because there is a critical need for EHR-agnostic clinical decision support platforms that enable sharing across healthcare organizations.

“The goal of the CDS project is to enable a standards-based and scalable CDS platform for individualized cancer screening to be used across healthcare organizations,” say Principal Investigators Guilherme Del Fiol, MD, PhD and Kensaku Kawamoto, MD, PhD, both Assistant Professors of Biomedical Informatics at University of Utah Health. “To achieve this goal, our team of researchers will extend and solidify two well-established open source CDS Web services based on rule logic (OpenCDS) and information retrieval (OpenInfobutton).”

Working with primary care physicians, oncologists, and genetic counselors, researchers will develop CDS algorithms and interventions to support individualized screening of breast and colorectal cancer using two modalities:

1. Automatic detection of patients at high risk for breast and colorectal cancer according to national cancer guidelines;
2. Individualized evidence for providers and patients to better understand risk-appropriate screening strategies.

“With the collaboration between the University of Utah and Intermountain Healthcare, and the support of the National Cancer Institute, we have the potential to produce a CDS platform that has significant impact on individualizing cancer screening according to the best available evidence,” says Dr. Narus. “Our aim is to improve patient care and outcomes through evidence-based medicine.”

With consultation from Intermountain, University of Utah Health will be responsible for developing the CDS platform and workflows and demonstrating it in their care delivery system. Intermountain will then evaluate the solution against Intermountain’s care delivery system to show that the application and workflow are transferable to another organization and EHR.

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