Pharma and Healthcare AI Vendors Join Forces To Accelerate Progress In Drug Discovery

Sept. 12, 2018   by Andrii Buvailo

Today Basel is crowded with some of the top business and research leaders representing a young and rapidly growing industry of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare and pharmaceutical research. They come together to announce mission and launch activities of a global Alliance for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare (AAIH), which is to become a leading international organization for advancing artificial intelligence innovations in Drug Discovery, Clinical Research, Diagnostics, Precision Medicine and other key areas of pharmaceutical research and healthcare. The newly formed alliance will be a voice of the industry in matters of education, lobbying for policies and regulations, facilitating investment, and promoting AI-innovations among top drug makers and healthcare institutions.

The formation of AAIH is primarily driven by the AI-startups and academic institutions, being at the far front of the innovation, but also supported by pharmaceutical companies -- some of the front-runners of AI-adoption in their research strategy. The list of AAIH founding members includes:

- AI Infrastructure developer
- Benevolent AI
- BlackThorn Therapeutics
- The Buck Institute for Research on Aging
- Cyclica
- Envisagenics
- BioPharma1

- GE Healthcare

- Insilico Medicine

- BioPharma2

- NuMedii

- Numerate

- OWKIN

- Recursion

- University of Pittsburgh

After meeting during Boston Biotech Week on September 6th (Boston, MA), the founding members of the AAIH are gathering together again during the Basel Life Congress on September 13th (Basel, CH) to finalize plans for the activities for the first 12 months of AAIH operations. The official launch of the AAIH is schedules for January 2019 -- during the week of the JP Morgan Healthcare Conference in San Francisco.

An ever-increasing pressure on pharmaceutical companies, caused by huge R&D spends leading, nonetheless, to continually poor results (roughly 90% of clinical trials fail), stimulates drug makers search for radically new technological solutions.

At the same time, healthcare organizations are also in need of transformative approaches, since healthcare costs in developed countries are steadily increasing as a result of rapidly aging populations and multiple inefficiencies in the healthcare system.

Numerous large and middle cap pharmaceutical companies, as well as medical organizations, has begun a hunt for artificial intelligence innovation over the last several years -- after observing a staggering practical success of AI technologies in image/video/language processing, game playing, data mining and contextualization, vehicle and robot automation, etc (in turn, this latter success is caused by an exponential growth in compute powers, data storage capabilities, cloud infrastructures, and synergistically, breakthroughs in AI algorithms -- Deep Learning (2012); Generative Adversarial Networks (2015)).

> We are on the cusp of major breakthroughs in the application of machine learning, computational science, and artificial intelligence, which carry the potential to dramatically improve the quality and affordability of healthcare globally, said Brandon Allgood CTO and Founder of Numerate Inc (originally reported in press-release by Opus Biotech Communications).

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Driven by a growing demand from pharma/healthcare organizations, a new industry of pharma AI-expertise and tool vendors has emerged over just several years – with over 100 startup companies offering AI for drug discovery having formed since 2014, and more than 1000 AI-driven companies offering AI tools and systems for healthcare, digital health and clinical medicine.

The newly announced Alliance for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare (AAIH) is a major step in solidifying the pharma/healthcare AI industry ecosystem and creating a transparent frame for assessing technological expertise, educating potential end-users about specific use-cases in pharma research, and lobbying adequate laws and regulations on the level of FDA, EMA and governments around the globe -- to facilitate the AI adoption for the benefit of the medical progress.

> "If we are to build upon our recent industry success, and realize the true potential of AI, it is crucial that the sector organize immediately to enact policies and practices that will enable efficient adoption, integration, and commercialization," said Alex Zhavoronkov, CEO of Insilico Medicine (originally reported in press-release by Opus Biotech Communications).

The AAIH is open for new qualified members from various areas of AI infrastructure and applications in healthcare to join.

> "It is the privilege of AAIH to unify and amplify the voice of companies and organizations from all sectors utilizing AI in healthcare," said Annastasiah Mhaka from Adjuvant Partners. Adjuvant Partners and Holland & Knight are independent firms leading the launch of AAIH (originally reported in press-release by Opus Biotech Communications).

- BenevolentAI
- Cyclica
- Envisagenics
- Insilico Medicine
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- OWKIN
- Recursion Pharmaceuticals