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## Dell, University at Buffalo to create Institute for Healthcare Informatics

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Computer giant Dell is making a \$15 million investment in computer equipment and services to support the launch of the University at Buffalo's new Institute for Healthcare Informatics.

UB and Dell made the announcement at a news conference Sept. 23.

The institute will be established in a 15,000-square-foot space in Buffalo that will be renovated to accommodate Dell's high-powered computers and 100 employees from UB, Dell, Buffalo-based technology company CTG, and UB Associates, the management service organization supporting UBMD, a multispecialty group practice whose 450 physicians are faculty at the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

The project has the potential to create approximately 115 new high-paying jobs in computer programming and data analysis, and new entry-level positions in medical records management, Dell and UB officials said.

Creation of the UB Institute for Healthcare Informatics will help establish UB and the Buffalo region as a major hub for medical informatics in the State University of New York (SUNY) system, throughout New York State and beyond, they said.

The UB institute initially will focus on sharing data among the 450 healthcare practitioners who participate in UBMD, said David Dunn, MD, UB vice president for health sciences. The institute's data analysis and records management resources eventually will be extended to health care practitioners - doctors, nurses, pharmacists, etc. - throughout the region and New York State.

"Creation of the Institute for Healthcare Informatics will enable UB to attract additional millions of dollars in research funding," said Dunn. "This funding will establish UB and Buffalo as a national leader in medical informatics, leading to better patient care and potentially producing hundreds of new jobs and new businesses in Buffalo."

For Dell, the partnership with the UB Institute for Healthcare Informatics advances the company's expansion into the healthcare technology sector, with a focus on data-driven medicine. Dell's partnership with UB builds on the company's fruitful relationship with the

university. Installation of new Dell high-performance computing clusters in 2002 in UB's Center for Computational Research, located within UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, enabled UB to nearly double computing capacity for university research.

The UB Institute for Healthcare Informatics also is supported by a \$20 million "HEAL NY" grant received last week from the New York State Department of Health. Under the grant, UB, working with Sheehan Health Network, Erie County Medical Center and other local health care systems, will use informatics to study and reduce the impact of chronic diseases and addiction disorders in regional patient populations.

The institute will have a statewide impact, as well. SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher said plans are underway for the UB Institute for Healthcare Informatics to be a leading informatics center within SUNY. SUNY's medical centers and university centers will tap into the computational strength of the UB institute for medical research and data management.

"By training students and producing research in this cutting-edge technology area, this center will help us realize SUNY's strategic goals in the areas of healthcare and economic development," said Zimpher.

Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown said establishing Buffalo and UB as leaders in medical informatics is critical to Buffalo's future and the emergence of a new, knowledge-based programs targeted to entry-level medical records management jobs.

Russell Bessette, MD, UB associate vice president for health sciences and principal investigator on the HEAL NY grant, will serve as executive director of the UB Institute for Healthcare Informatics. He said the new UB institute would produce a standard way for healthcare practitioners statewide to share data, monitor trends in patient care and access expertise from a network of health care practitioners. This will help link rural or remote healthcare practitioners with healthcare specialists who otherwise would not be accessible to rural communities.

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