

Partners HealthCare leverages artificial intelligence to automate processes for verifying and updating professional licensure.

Overview

In November 2018, Partners HealthCare began its “automation journey” to transform certain human resources functions and tasks. As a health care system employing more than 75,000 people, it has the responsibility to verify more than 28,000* licenses annually with the issuing body during each renewal period.

Historically, Partners HealthCare manually verified and updated licenses. The process was a perfect candidate for automation because it was highly manual and very routine with the same steps needing to be repeated. Accuracy and timeliness are crucial for license verifications. If they aren’t completed or done incorrectly, it could pose a high risk.

To address this issue, Partners HealthCare developed “Betty,” a bot that checks licenses with the state renewal board for each renewal period. At first, Partners piloted Betty with just three of its hospitals and only a few categories of licenses, such as registered nurses and pharmacists. Betty now manages 57 categories of licenses at those three hospitals and sends providers 30-60-90-day renewal reminders before expiration. The human resources department receives a daily report identifying licenses nearing expiration.

Impact

Using automation, Partners’ human resources department and managers saved 2,800 hours of labor time in just the first year. Using Betty has also harmonized processes across hospitals. After its first year, the process received ringing endorsements from all stakeholders — employees, managers and human resources staff.

Future Goals

Partners HealthCare expects to expand its use of Betty to manage additional license verifications at all its hospitals in the near future. After finding success with Betty, the team also developed a second bot, Dale, that works with the HRIS system to update the department table when a manager, approver or HR business partner transitions to an inactive status, ensuring that transactions do not get missed. Partners will continue to look for ways to use AI to automate other high-volume tasks and has asked its team members to submit ideas for tasks that could be helped by automation.

*This number does not include physician licensure. Physician licensure verification is handled through a separate process.

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