

2020

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

# TRAILBLAZERS

HEALTH CARE | LIFE SCIENCE



**JEFF JOHNSON**  
WILMERHALE

**PIONEER SPIRIT** With degrees in engineering and information systems policy, Jeff Johnson was deeply involved in technology and data licensing issues long before joining a law firm. Since graduating from Stanford Law School, he has practiced technology law at WilmerHale for over 20 years. “Technology and related issues have changed a lot, but you learn to adapt and consistently apply core IP and contract principles to evolving technologies.

**TRAILS BLAZED** In a recent transaction involving digital health and artificial intelligence, Johnson represented a data analytics firm in an exclusive partner agreement with Mayo Clinic, involving applying an AI-powered engine to Mayo’s clinical data for research and development while implementing structures protecting patient privacy. He also recently represented other prominent AI providers in an agreement with a medical research center to provide millions of de-identified images and patient information for AI development and in agreements with pharmaceutical companies to employ AI-powered tools in drug development and commercialization. Other recent work includes representing a genomics company in negotiation of a collaboration and reseller agreement with a major MIS provider. “Resolving a customer’s rights in data with an AI provider’s ownership of their AI platform can be complex. The AI typically learns from customer data, and the AI provider expects to maintain ownership of their resulting AI. At the same time, addressing regulatory constraints and protecting personal information and data rights are also necessary to reach an agreement.”

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** Johnson believes advances in technology will continue to drive rapid developments in health care AI transactions while regulatory changes accelerate. “We see many innovative and exciting applications of AI in genomics, biotech and pharma. Health care AI contracts need to address IP and risk issues for both parties, along with rapidly evolving and expanding regulatory requirements. It is an exciting time to practice in this area.”