Health Level Seven Announces New Affiliate — HL7 Turkey

ANN ARBOR, Mich.— December 31, 2004 — Health Level Seven (HL7), one of the world’s most prolific healthcare standards developers, recently announced the addition of HL7 Turkey to its growing number of international affiliates. HL7 Turkey joins international affiliates already established in 26 other countries including: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lithuania, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom.

HL7 Board Chair Mark Shafarman said the increasing number of international HL7 affiliates reflects growing and significant international contributions to the HL7 family of standards, as well as an increasing global scope and orientation in those standards. “We welcome the participation from HL7 Turkey in the development of the HL7 standards,” said Shafarman. “And we look forward to HL7 standards being adopted and adapted for use in healthcare in Turkey.”

HL7 Turkey is chaired by Bulent Kunac, deputy general manager of Tepe Technology and managing director of corTTex Nederlands BV. Kunac is a computer engineer with an MSc degree, and sits on the Board of the Turkish Medical Informatics Association (TurkMIA).

He says that the organization’s first priority as an HL7 affiliate is to disseminate the fact that HL7 is not only a communications protocol (a common misunderstanding in Turkey), but a comprehensive standard composed of reference information model, vocabulary, clinical document and context management infrastructures as well as many more components from which both healthcare providers/payers and IT companies can fully benefit in developing their context-aware applications. “One of the primary missions of HL7 Turkey is to first coordinate then combine the discrete activities related to HL7,” Kunac said. “We want to form a reference and reachable center for HL7 studies where institutions can retrieve not only the standard itself, but also the best practices and guidelines.” He says that sessions and studies with related workgroups under the Ministry of Health have already been started in order to utilize HL7 as a national e-health standard in Turkey.

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The growing number of international affiliates is helping shape HL7 standards to ensure they meet the requirements of the global healthcare IT community. Each affiliate contributes their requirements to the core standards through the HL7 technical committees and participates in the standard voting process. An international representative, elected by the affiliates, also sits on the HL7 Board of Directors.

Like HL7 Inc., each affiliate is an open, not-for-profit and consensus-based organization. As affiliates, they support and distribute the HL7 standards in their country, produce translations and implementation guides for their users and participate in technical committee work.

**About HL7**

Founded in 1987, Health Level Seven, Inc. ([http://www.HL7.org/](http://www.HL7.org/)) is a not-for-profit, ANSI-accredited standards developing organization dedicated to providing a comprehensive framework and related standards for the exchange, integration, sharing, and retrieval of electronic health information that supports clinical practice and the management, delivery and evaluation of health services. HL7’s more than 2,000 members represent approximately 500 corporate members, including 90 percent of the largest information systems vendors serving healthcare.

HL7’s endeavors are sponsored, in part, by the support of its benefactors: Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.; Capgemini; Documentum; Eclipsys Corporation; Eli Lilly & Company; the Food and Drug Administration; GE Medical Systems; Guidant Corporation; HIMS Solutions, Inc.; IBM; IDX Systems Corporation; InterSystems Corporation; Kaiser Permanente; McKesson Information Solutions; Microsoft Corporation; Misys Healthcare Systems; NHS National Programme for IT; NICTIZ National ICT Institute for Healthcare in The Netherlands; Oracle Corporation; Partners HealthCare System, Inc.; Pfizer, Inc.; Philips Medical Systems; Quest Diagnostics Inc.; Science Applications International Corporation; Siemens Medical Solutions Health Services; the U.S. Department of Defense; Military Health System; the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.

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