Health Level Seven Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) X12

ANN ARBOR, Mich.—March 16, 2005 — Health Level Seven (HL7) Inc., one of the world’s most prolific healthcare standards developers, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) X12, in yet another example of HL7’s proactive efforts of cooperation and harmonization in healthcare standards development.

“As a former co-chair of ASC X12N/TG3 (Insurance Subcommittee/Transaction Coordination and Modeling), I’m happy to see a further strengthening of the longstanding relationship between our two organizations,” said Chuck Meyer, Chair-elect of HL7. “This memorandum of understanding can only lead to further collaboration on transactions enhancing the exchange of administrative information under HIPAA. Our joint efforts resulting in the electronic claims attachment proposal only foretell the advantages of this relationship to the industry.”

“We at X12 are pleased to enhance the important relationship we have with HL7,” said ASC X12 Chair Ralph Berwanger. “This strategic collaboration will help us reduce redundancies in our XML development initiatives, achieve global harmonization of standards and lower healthcare systems interoperability costs.”

Together, ASC X12 will work in concert with HL7 to harmonize such standards as the X12 275 patient information transaction set. At present, the HL7 XML framework is encapsulated in the X12 EDI 275. ASC X12 currently crafts XML messages using its Context Inspired Component Architecture (CICA), whereas HL7 uses its Clinical Document Architecture. Both organizations will endeavor to reconcile redundant messages via this new MOU.

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MOUs, or Associate Charter Agreements, are intended to establish guidelines by which the two organizations will collaborate on future projects and joint work efforts. They are also meant to avoid redundancy in standards creation and work products. Such agreements are key to enabling open communication in an industry where multiple standards development organizations operate in overlapping information exchange domains and share member companies, trading partners, and business requirements.

About HL7
Founded in 1987, Health Level Seven, Inc. (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. Recently, HL7 joined 12 other healthcare stakeholders in a collaborative response to the Request for Information (RFI) issued by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) to learn how widespread interoperability of health information technologies and health information exchange could be achieved through a National Health Information Network (NHIN). The Collaborative response can be viewed in its entirety at: http://www.hl7.org/Library/General/Collaborative_RFI_Responsefinal.pdf. The HL7 additional response specific to Standards and Policies to Achieve Interoperability can be found at http://www.hl7.org/Library/General/HL7Q14-18_final.pdf.

HL7's endeavors are sponsored, in part, by the support of its benefactors: Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.; Capgemini; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); 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 Provider Technologies; 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.

HL7 International affiliates have also been established in 27 countries throughout the globe 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, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

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About the Accredited Standards Committee X12
The Accredited Standards Committee X12, accredited by the American National Standards Institute and comprised of cross-industry representation, develops robust e-business exchange standards in X12 EDI and XML formats that interact with a multitude of e-business technologies and serve as a premier tool for integrating electronic applications. With more than 2,500 individuals representing approximately 350 corporate members, ASC X12 facilitates the effective exchange of electronic information through standards-setting and active participation in emerging and technically relevant initiatives. Propelling global e-business, ASC X12 is an active contributor to the United Nations/Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT), an international standard relating to the exchange of good and services. To learn more about ASC X12, visit http://www.X12.org or call 703-970-4480.

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