Health Level Seven Signs Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBS)

ANN ARBOR, Mich.— March 24, 2005 — Health Level Seven (HL7) Inc., one of the world’s most prolific healthcare standards developers, has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBS). This agreement is consistent with HL7’s long-standing spirit of cooperation and harmonization in healthcare standards development.

“HL7 and IEEE have a long history of collaboration and joint meetings to further the interoperability of our respective standards in the domain of healthcare information exchange,” said Chuck Meyer, HL7 Chair-elect. “The formalization of this relationship simply lays the groundwork for continued collaboration in that domain and opens the door to expand our relationship, should that become necessary, in support of the National Health Information Infrastructure (NHII) initiative.”

“I am very pleased to have this agreement with HL7,” said Yongmin Kim, Ph.D., president of the IEEE EMBS. “This agreement formally recognizes the longstanding collaboration between HL7 and IEEE EMBS 1073 in developing standards that support the integration of acute care medical devices into the healthcare enterprise information infrastructure. This includes harmonization of terminology and data models for the purpose of forging interoperability — both semantic and functional — between the point-of-care and healthcare enterprise.”

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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 IEEE EMBS 1073
The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society (EMBS) is dedicated to advancing the application of engineering sciences and technology to medicine and biology, sponsoring conferences and publications in areas such as bioengineering, information technology in biomedicine, nanobioscience, computational biology and bioinformatics. The EMBS 1073 Committee for point-of-care medical device communication is dedicated to providing internationally harmonized standards that support real-time plug-and-play interoperability for typically patient-connected medical devices, and that facilitate the efficient exchange of vital signs and medical device data, acquired at the point-of-care, in all healthcare environments. As an independent ANSI Standards Development Organization and working closely with its international counterparts, namely ISO TC215 and CEN TC251, the IEEE EMBS 1073 Committee has developed and continues to extend a comprehensive set of standards that support interoperability of these devices from the physical connector to general application service models to abstract information models and terminology, providing plug-and-play across all seven ISO OSI communication model layers and defining both the protocol mechanisms and data content exchanged with these devices.

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

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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.