Health Level Seven Supports EHR Interoperability Collaboration Process to Promote Industry-Proven Options

HL7 moves forward with clinician guidance

ANN ARBOR, Mich.—May 19, 2005—To accelerate interoperability, enhance efficiency and improve patient safety through industry collaboration, Health Level Seven (HL7) is participating in the EHR interoperability collaboration process for the creation and management of standardized medical summaries and other clinical templates.

Health Level Seven (HL7), along with the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) and HIMSS EHR Vendors Association (EHRVA) have begun work on this effort by establishing a coordinated set of activities that would provide an HL7 implementation guide and launch a new patient care coordination IHE domain, with demonstrated interoperability of medical summary documents by January 2006.

This process was advanced at the HL7 May Working Group Meeting where two of its technical committees, Patient Care and Structured Documents, voted to revise the Care Record Summary ballots and to submit the revisions to the EHR interoperability collaboration process in time for incorporation into the 2006 demonstration of interoperability.

“The feedback we received through the ballot on the Care Record Summaries was quite helpful, and together with the collaboration process hosted by HIMSS we are gathering consensus for an integrated, standards-based method for managing the transfer of care,” said Dan Russler, MD, co-chair of the HL7 Patient Care technical committee.

As one of the next steps in the collaborative process, clinicians and other key stakeholders will meet June 1-3 in Chicago, Ill. to solidify plans for the standards, implementation guides and related Integration Profiles now under development as part of the IHE Patient Care Coordination domain.

“HL7 is pleased to be a part of this collaborative effort and looks forward to continued work with the clinician and vendor communities participating in HIMSS, EHRVA and IHE,” said HL7 Board Chair Mark Shafarman.

About Health Level Seven (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 2,200 members represent approximately 500 corporate members, including 90 percent of the largest information systems vendors serving healthcare.

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HL7's endeavors are sponsored, in part, by the support of its benefactors: Capgemini; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Documentum; Eclipsys Corporation; Eli Lilly & Company; the Food and Drug Administration; GE Medical Systems; Guidant Corporation; IBM; IDX Systems Corporation; InterSystems Corporation; Kaiser Permanente; McKesson Provider Technologies; Microsoft Corporation; Misys Healthcare Systems; NHS Connecting for Health; 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.

About HIMSS
The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) is the healthcare industry’s membership organization exclusively focused on providing leadership for the optimal use of healthcare information technology (IT) and management systems for the betterment of human health. Founded in 1961 with offices in Chicago, Washington D.C., and other locations across the country, HIMSS represents more than 15,000 individual members and over 250 member corporations that employ more than 1 million people. HIMSS frames and leads healthcare public policy and industry practices through its advocacy, educational and professional development initiatives designed to promote information and management systems' contributions to ensuring quality patient care. See similar announcement by HIMSS (4/26/2005) http://www.himss.org/pressroom/ASP/releaseDetail.asp?ContentID=64954).

About IHE
IHE (http://www.ihe.net) is a global initiative spanning 15 countries, now in its seventh year, which creates the framework for passing vital health information seamlessly—from application to application, system to system, and setting to setting—across multiple healthcare enterprises. IHE brings together healthcare information technology stakeholders to implement standards for communicating patient information efficiently throughout and among healthcare enterprises by developing a framework for interoperability. Because of its proven process of collaboration, demonstration and real world implementation of interoperable solutions, IHE is in a unique position to significantly accelerate the process for defining, testing, and implementing standards-based interoperability among electronic health records systems.

About HIMSS EHR Vendors Association
HIMSS EHRVA is a trade association of Electronic Health Record (EHR) vendors addressing national efforts to accelerate EHR adoption in hospitals and ambulatory care settings. The primary mission of the association is to provide a unified voice and a forum for cooperation within the EHR vendor community relative to standards development, the EHR certification process, interoperability, performance and quality measures and other EHR issues as they become subject to increasing government, insurance and physician association initiatives and requests. Membership is open to HIMSS corporate members with legally formed companies designing, developing and marketing their own commercially available EHRs with installations in the USA. The association, comprised of 33 member companies, is a partner of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and operates as an organizational unit within HIMSS. For more information, visit http://www.himssehrva.org.

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