



**BlueCross BlueShield  
Association**

An Association of Independent  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

**For Immediate Release**

**Health Level Seven, America's Health Insurance Plans, and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Sign MOU to Collaborate on Portability Standards for Personal Health Records**

*Collaboration on portability standards will give plan members the ability to move health data electronically when changing health plans.*

**ANN ARBOR, Mich., – December 4, 2007 --** Health Level Seven, Inc. (HL7), America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), today announced they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to create a collaborative process for the maintenance of portability standards for personal health records (PHR).

This MOU expands the number of stakeholders involved in the standards development process to help facilitate data portability between health insurance plans to give plan members the ability to move their personal health data when their health coverage changes.

Charles Jaffe, MD, PhD, and CEO of HL7 said, "We applaud AHIP and BCBSA for investing in the early development efforts of the PHR data portability standards and for entrusting HL7 to maintain the standards. PHR's will give consumers the power to integrate and manage their personal healthcare information and it provides a framework for standards-based interoperability between the consumer and the provider."

Health insurance plan-based PHRs contain claims encounter and administrative data drawn from health insurance plan data sources as well as individuals' self-entered information.

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AHIP and BCBSA have developed an implementation guide ("Implementation Guide for the Personal Health Record Data Transfer Between Health Plans") containing technical standards, a data dictionary and operating rules for the transfer of PHR data elements between health insurance plans. Use of the Implementation Guide by health plans allows individuals to move PHR data when their health coverage changes, in compliance with applicable state and federal privacy and security laws.

"Personal health records will serve as the foundation for connecting patients with providers, and offer consumers peace of mind," said Karen Ignagni, President of AHIP. "We are pleased to be collaborating with the BCBSA to work hand in hand to create the best uniform application."

To ensure long-term maintenance of the standards, AHIP and BCBSA have agreed to turn over the maintenance of the technical standards components of the Implementation Guide to HL7 and ASC X12 for further development, balloting and joint long-term maintenance.

AHIP, BCBSA and HL7 will appoint a liaison to represent each organization in carrying out activities in support of the MOU.

"BCBSA believes the increased use of personal health records will allow consumers to play a greater role in their own health care and ultimately improve health outcomes," said Scott P. Serota, BCBSA president and CEO. "BCBSA is proud of our partnership with AHIP, HL7 and other organizations to promote the use of PHR standards."

Through this agreement, AHIP, BCBSA and HL7 have the opportunity to undertake joint efforts to accomplish tasks or projects that contribute to the purpose of this MOU.

HL7 formed a PHR Working Group in early 2005 to develop a set of functions present in a PHR System and guidelines that facilitate health information exchange among different PHR systems and between PHR and EHR systems.

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In early 2008, HL7 intends to publish a PHR-S Functional Model Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU) version to allow the industry to work with a stable standard for up to two years while it is being refined into an ANSI-accredited version.

### **About Health Level Seven (HL7)**

Founded in 1987, Health Level Seven, Inc. ([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 2,300 members represent approximately 500 corporate members, which includes more than 90 percent of the information systems vendors serving healthcare.

HL7's endeavors are sponsored, in part, by the support of its benefactors: Accenture; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Duke Clinical Research Institute (DCRI); Eclipsys Corporation; Eli Lilly & Company; Epic Systems Corporation; European Medicines Agency; the Food and Drug Administration; GE Healthcare Information Technologies; GlaxoSmithKline; IBM; Intel Corporation; InterSystems Corporation; J&J PRD; Kaiser Permanente; McKesson Provider Technologies; Microsoft Corporation; Misys Healthcare Systems; NICTIZ National Healthcare; Novartis; Oracle Corporation; Partners HealthCare System, Inc.; Pfizer, Inc.; Philips Medical Systems; Progress Software Corporation-DataDirect Technologies Division; QuadraMed Corporation; Quest Diagnostics Inc.; Science Applications International Corporation; Siemens Medical Solutions Health Services; St. Jude Medical; Thomson Healthcare; the U.S. Department of Defense, Military Health System; the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.

Numerous HL7 Affiliates have been established around the globe including Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia,

Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

### **About America's Health Insurance Plans**

America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) is a national association representing nearly 1,300 member providing health benefits to more than 200 million Americans. AHIP's members offer a broad range of products in the commercial marketplace including health, long-term care, dental, vision, disability, and supplemental coverage and have a strong track record of participation in Medicare, Medicaid, and other public programs.

### **About the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 39 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for more than 99 million - nearly one-in-three- Americans. For more information on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and its member companies, please visit [www.BCBS.com](http://www.BCBS.com).

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