Health Level Seven Announces Newest Affiliate—HL7 Luxembourg

*HL7 standards are a solid basis of Luxembourg’s national electronic health record system*

**ANN ARBOR, Mich., USA — April 18, 2011** — Health Level Seven® (HL7®), the global authority on standards for interoperability of health information technology with members in 55 countries, today announced the addition of HL7 Luxembourg to its growing number of more than 30 affiliates. HL7 affiliates are a critical component of the increasing global scope and orientation of the HL7 family of standards.

“The success of Health Level Seven and the extensive global implementation of its standards are benefited greatly by the significant contributions from our affiliate members around the world,” said HL7 CEO Dr. Charles Jaffe, MD, PhD. “The skills of many individuals in Luxembourg will bring an invaluable addition to HL7. We welcome HL7 Luxembourg to the organization and look forward to their support for the adoption of health informatics standards in Europe and for the development of global HL7 standards.”

HL7 Luxembourg is chaired by Dr. Stefan Benzschawel. He earned a degree in computer science at the University of Kaiserslautern in Germany. After completing his studies, Dr. Benzschawel worked for five years as a member of an IBM financed research group and as scientific collaborator of the University Trier in Germany, where he also earned a Doctorate degree. His software and healthcare industry experience is based on three years at SAP as a system analyst and software developer as well as 10 years as a research and development manager at AGFA HealthCare. Since 2009, Dr. Benzschawel has been the project leader for eHealth at the Public Research Centre Henri Tudor in Luxembourg.
Co-Chair René Krippes has a Master’s degree in economics from the University of Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium. After completing his studies, he worked in the statistical office in Luxembourg, where he developed an IT solution for foreign trade statistics. In 2001, he joined eLuxembourg TaskForce, later Service eLuxembourg, whose role was to enforce the development of IT solutions for e-government. Mr. Krippes was instrumental in the implementation of the health portal and helped the Health Ministry define a national ehealth action plan with the stakeholders of the health sector. He is also a part of the ehealth team in charge of the coordination work for ehealth in Luxembourg.

“For years, Luxembourg has been using HL7 standards inside of healthcare institutions. The good experience therein encourages us to extend the usage of HL7 standards toward the implementation of our national, patient-oriented, electronic health record system,” said René Krippes. Stefan Benzschawel continued, “Luxembourg is a small country in the heart of Europe; the need of electronic information exchange over country borders has high priority. Our national EHR system will be based on IHE XDS profiles combined with pseudonymization and encryption extensions. We think that these needs match as well the data protection needs of other countries or regions.”

Like HL7 International, HL7 Luxembourg is an open, non-profit and consensus-based organization. Each affiliate contributes to the development of core HL7 standards through participation in HL7 work groups and the standards voting process and then localizes the standards to its specific requirements. Affiliates also support and distribute the HL7 standards in their country, produce translations and implementation guides for their users, and participate in HL7 work groups. HL7 Luxembourg’s immediate activities and goals are directed at the following areas:

1. Checking standards extensions for the country-wide electronic health record in Luxembourg
2. Promoting and using the standards to support the development of the electronic health record in Luxembourg
3. Providing input to HL7 about the specific needs in Luxembourg to complement the comprehensiveness of existing HL7 standards

HL7 Luxembourg stated, “The adoption of HL7 in Luxembourg will improve and accelerate the EHR system to become an interoperable system able to share information in a standardized way throughout Luxembourg. It is our hope that the diagnosis and treatment of patients will benefit from accurate and complete information that can be quickly accessed.”
About HL7

Founded in 1987, Health Level Seven, Inc. is the leading global authority for healthcare Information interoperability and standards with members in 55 countries. HL7 is a non-profit, ANSI accredited standards development 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 include more than 90 percent of the information systems vendors serving healthcare. HL7 collaborates with other standards developers and provider, payer, philanthropic and government agencies at the highest levels to ensure the development of comprehensive and reliable standards and successful interoperability efforts.

HL7’s endeavors are sponsored, in part, by the support of its benefactors: Abbott; Accenture; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Duke Translational Medicine Institute; Epic; European Medicines Agency; the Food and Drug Administration; GE Healthcare Information Technologies; GlaxoSmithKline; IBM; Intel Corporation; InterSystems Corporation; Kaiser Permanente; Lockheed Martin; McKesson Provider Technology; Microsoft Corporation; NICTIZ National Healthcare; Novartis; Oracle Corporation; Partners HealthCare System, Inc.; Pfizer, Inc.; Philips Healthcare; Quest Diagnostics Inc.; Siemens Healthcare; Thomson Reuters; the U.S. Department of Defense, Military Health System; and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Numerous HL7 Affiliates have been established around the globe including Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

For more information, please visit: www.HL7.org.

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