



Technical Steering Committee

E-NEWSLETTER

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February 19, 2010

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Message from the TSC Chair

By Charlie McCay
Chair, TSC

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As we streamline the HL7 standards development process, we need to make the best possible use of our meetings. Many people and groups in HL7 are striving to make the Working Group Meetings (WGMs) as effective as possible. The TSC is looking at how it can contribute to this, and we would welcome input and suggestions. The recent survey on international WGMs revealed that having agendas out early made it easier for people to put together the business case for attending. Knowing what “big” decisions are to be made at a WGM also makes a difference. The TSC can look at how this information is surfaced and published as part of the WGM promotion effort. But that is just an example to get you thinking. What we want are ideas to make the time spent at an HL7 Working Group Meetings even more valuable and effective.

We also recognize that engaging with HL7 is not limited to the Working Group Meetings – we need to continue to make our projects, products and work groups accessible throughout the year, and make the value that they deliver visible. The TSC will support the work towards this in the following work groups: Electronic Services, Publishing, Process Improvement Committee, the Project Management Office, Project Services, Marketing, and the Technical and Support Services Steering Division. These improvements to the standards development process are there to support the work of the co-chairs and editors in delivering standards. Working together on this visibility is vital to facilitating standards adoption and to ensuring that we have broad stakeholder engagement.



Tooling Report

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2009 Tooling Accomplishments

Creating and maintaining tools continues to be one of the highest priorities for HL7. In particular, the organization is focused on creating tools that:

- Support HL7's internal balloting and publishing processes
- Enable HL7 users to create specifications that can be used by project planners, system designers and systems implementers
- Support testing a specific implementation of HL7 standards against its implementation guide.

The investment needed to develop these tools is significant and has therefore been spread across multiple years.

The tooling budget for 2009 included both HL7 HQ infrastructure components and HL7 Tooling products. Software licenses for the HL7 website and Gforge and the costs to re-host Gforge—a service provided for many years by the University of Las Vegas—comprised the bulk of the infrastructure components included in last year’s tooling budget. The 2009 budget also funded the following projects, over 90% of which were successfully completed:

- CTO support for tooling project coordination and planning – Completed satisfactorily, this project provided support to the CTO relative to the 2009 tooling projects.
- Vocabulary harmonization – Completed satisfactorily, this project provided updates to the V3 repository after each of the three harmonization meetings to reflect the harmonization-approved vocabulary changes, ensuring that ballot content reflects the most recent vocabulary.
- Vocabulary algorithmic update and cleanup - Completed satisfactorily, this project focused on correcting known and ongoing problems with HL7’s vocabulary. The corrections will improve ballot quality and reduce problems with static model designing.
- OID registry content cleanup – Completed satisfactorily, this project focused on cleanup of current OID registry data, which is used by all HL7 work groups and external users who review and/or add OIDs.
- OID registry update – Partially completed in 2009, this project’s goal is to improve the current OID registry user interface and improve user documentation. Two deliverables will carry over into 2010.
- W3C copyright resolution - Completed satisfactorily, this project modified HL7 XML schema for HXML for incorporation into the MIF schema. It reconciled HL7’s schema with current W3C copyright.
- Static Model Designer requirements and testing – Satisfactorily completed, this is a collaborative project between HL7, OHT and NHS which is focused on designing a GUI tool to design static models, including templates, for documents, messages and services.
- IHTSDO Workbench evaluation for Vocabulary Change Management Requirements – Completed satisfactorily, this project involved investigating the IHTSDO Workbench tools to determine how it can be used to manage HL7 vocabulary change requests and apply approved changes. Once fully implemented, this tool will benefit all HL7 Work Groups.
- Upgrade XML process – Completed satisfactorily, the project focused on enhancing the existing XML stream in the current publishing process to participate

in the new specification publication process. This enhancement will benefit the publishing work group and the HL7 staff who work with publishing.

2010 Tooling Projects

Several tooling projects are planned for 2010, including delivery of the two outstanding OID registry update deliverables from the 2009 contract. The following operational projects will be completed in 2010:

- SAIF Editor – This project will continue to focus on developing a Service Aware Interoperability Framework booklet in DITA format. The final product will benefit all HL7 work groups and members that participate in the development of standards.
- Planning & coordination support – As described above, this project provides support to the CTO
- Vocabulary harmonization support – As in 2009, the V3 repository will be updated following each of the three harmonization sessions.
- Enterprise DITA Tool – 2010 tooling budget funds will be used to purchase the enterprise version of the IBM DITA tool. DITA is an XML-based architecture for authoring, producing, and delivering information. Topic-based, DITA formatted documents allow the reuse of information and should simplify our documentation requirements

A number of 2010 tooling projects are planned around implementation of the Static Model Designer, including:

- Software enhancements to the current tool
- Revisions to the V3 Generator to be driven by MIF2
- Development of training materials

The XML processing that was upgraded in 2009 will be implemented during 2010 through the following projects:

- Development of an XML Validator tool (replacement for current outdated software)
- Development of Shared Artifact Repository requirements for:
 - Templates Registry pilot
 - Templates Design pilot
 - IHTSDO Workbench SNOMED CT Subset Pilot
 - OHT Packaging and Deployment Project (Innovation project)
- Enhancements to IHTSDO Workbench to include:
 - MIF enabled import/export

- HL7 Vocabulary Harmonization configuration

Current activities involve: validating requirements, evaluating current process adjustments, organizing collaboration with OHT projects and estimating resource requirements. Adjustments to the planned projects may result. We will report on the status of the 2010 tooling projects in the subsequent editions of the Technical News.



Technical and Support Services Steering Division (T3SD) Report

By Ken McCaslin and Helen Stevens

Technical and Support Services Steering Division Co-Chairs

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Project Services now has two co-chairs with the election of Richard (Rick) Haddorff. We also would like to announce the appointment by the HL7 Board of Helen Stevens as chair of the Process Improvement Committee (PIC), and congratulate Robert Stegwee on being elected interim co-chair of PIC.

The steering division (SD) has recently spent some time looking at the work group health reports as defined by the Technical Steering Committee. These reports evaluate the "health" of the work groups based on a number of metrics including posted minutes, votes at the SD, conference calls attended, listserv activity, etc. During the Phoenix meeting, it was discussed that the uniqueness of the groups that make up this division may require a different health report card than other divisions. The work of the T3SD work groups involves different types of engagement with members and activities than the more directly standards development related work groups. Over the next cycle, the steering division will continue to explore what best defines the health of its work groups.

One of the challenges faced by this steering division's work groups is attracting good member participation in their activities. Whilst the groups are well supported by the HL7

staff, it is important for the decisions and direction within the work groups to be led by HL7 members. Ensuring that the technical and support services are meeting the needs of the HL7 members and all the other work groups is critical to the success of the HL7 mission. The T3SD work groups include Education, Electronic Services, Project Services, Process Improvement Committee, Tooling, Version 2 Publishing and Version 3 Publishing. If you are interested in providing some support or input into one of the work groups, we strongly encourage you to contact the co-chairs; and if you are unsure, you can always contact us.



Domain Experts Steering Division: Considerations for the Future Role of the Steering Divisions

By Austin Kreisler and Ed Tripp
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The steering divisions currently serve a number of functions around communication and consistency of practice among the member work groups. The current role provides cross work group communication on project scope statements, mission and charter documents, work group formation and dissolution, and a forum for projects to seek help and assistance in the development of artifacts related to the HL7 Development Framework (HDF) and Services Aware Interoperability Framework (SAIF) processes. In addition, the steering divisions monitor work group health and provide guidance and assistance to co-chairs in maintaining a healthy work group.

As we move into the future with the implementation of the new interoperability framework, adding a quality management role to the steering divisions is being discussed. Today, we rely on the ballot process to assure the quality of HL7 standards. It is still possible to develop an exceedingly poor quality standard and have it pass a normative ballot because no one took the time to look at it closely. Any effective quality management plan moves

quality checks up stream in the process rather than relying on end-of-process review to stop poor quality products from going out the door.

Work groups in the Foundation and Technology Steering Division already play a major role in the quality of the HL7 standard by providing RIM, vocabulary, data types, etc. that underpin the V3 standards other work groups develop. They also provide much of the methodology used to develop V3 standards.

Work groups in the Technical and Support Services Steering Division already play a major role by providing publishing processes, tooling, etc. used to develop standards.

Structure and Semantic Design Steering Division (SSDSD) work groups play a major role in developing design patterns that should be used in all the standards being developed. We already see this in CDA, Clinical Statement, Common Product Model, and many CMETs. Use of these patterns is optional however, which means that work groups are free to ignore patterns and develop inconsistent models. A consideration for future quality is to implement peer reviews of proposed standards for adherence to existing patterns. Where requirements can't be met by existing patterns, new patterns may need to be developed by work groups in the steering division. Work groups in this steering division would focus on developing general, reusable patterns that Domain Experts Steering Division (DESD) work groups can use to build templates or more specialized domain specific models.

DESD work groups need to use the patterns developed by the SSDSD to develop domain specific standards. Where existing patterns fail to meet requirements, work groups in this steering division need to work with SSDSD work groups to extend or create new patterns that meet requirements. DESD work groups will also be involved with developing quality standards for domain analysis models.

These concepts are presented to help begin the dialog on how to ensure quality of HL7 standards in the future. We invite you to join in the discussion by sending any thoughts or comments to the Domain Experts list server: domainexperts@lists.hl7.org



Electronic Services Work Group

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Did you know that there are trackers on gForge to capture bugs and suggested changes to the HL7 Website (HL7.org), the HL7 Wikis, and the HL7 Listserv? If you look on the right of the screen on gForge under 'Browse Project Topics' you will find 'Tooling'. Click on 'Tooling' to display a list of various tools including the HL7 Website, the HL7 Wikis and the HL7 Listserv.

If you encounter problems with any of these tools, please let us know by selecting the tool and describing the problem you encountered under 'Bugs'. If you have an idea that might make any of these tools work better, enter your suggestion under 'Feature Requests'. We do have a very full release schedule over the next two years. However, if we can make something work better for you we want to know and we will see what we can do to respond to your input within those constraints.

The complete release schedule can be found via the searchable project database and the sponsor is Electronic Services Work Group.

<http://www.hl7.org/permalink/?searchableProjectIndex>.

Thanks,

Electronic Services Work Group



Updates from the TSC since the January Working Group Meeting

By Lynn Laakso
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News of Note:

- The TSC will be conducting another session on “HL7 Activities with other SDOs” at the May WGM, since there is an ISO TC215/JWG meeting which precedes the WGM.
- The ArB is renaming SAEAF to SAIF to better describe its scope as Interoperability Framework rather than as an enterprise architecture. They are exploring ways to offer peer review, such as in a harmonization example. Check out the alpha project progress on the HL7 wiki page for the [EA IP](#) or the [ArB Publication Page](#).

Visibility Projects

Work Group Visibility

Work Group Visibility continues to emerge slowly. Already this calendar year, several work groups have reviewed and/or updated their mission and charter (M&C) statements. Almost half the work groups have updated their M&Cs in the past two years. Several are still in the approval process through their steering divisions. The TSC updated their mission and charter statement at the January WGM, and identified further changes to be explored in regards to steering division representative and alternates becoming ‘co-chairs’ and has begun discussion on the implementation of such a change.

Project Visibility

79 three-year planning items are now visible in the Project Insight searchable database, as part of the Project Insight Review and Cleanup. Only 10 work groups remain to update three-year plans in Project Insight. If you have questions, contact Lynn Laakso (lynn@HL7.org) or Dave Hamill (pmo@HL7.org).

Product Visibility

The proposed product list is holding fairly steady at about 83 products, but will be updated each ballot cycle. All of the products are available on the wiki, and all but ten have been reviewed by a steward work group.

Approvals

Approved Publications:

The TSC approved the following DSTU for publication

- Appointment CMETs by Patient Administration Work Group of Structure and Semantic Design Steering Division (SSD SD) (Project Insight ID=459) for 18 months. Interested parties are invited to download this DSTU and provide comments and feedback on the standards and their implementation once the documents become available at <http://www.hl7.org/dstucomments/>.

The TSC approved the following Informative documents for publication

- HL7 Version 2.5.1 Implementation Guide: Electronic Laboratory Reporting To Public Health (US Realm), Release 1 by Public Health and Emergency Response Work Group of DESD (Project Insight ID=457). This document is directly related to recent HHS Interim Final Rule regarding reporting of laboratory results to public health.

Approved Projects:

- Pharmacy Medication CMETs R2, for Pharmacy Work Group of Domain Experts Steering Division [DESD] (Project Insight ID= 557). The existing CMETs represent medication for identification and definition, which will be revised to be constraints on the Common Product Model.
- Regulated Product Submission Release 3 (RPS R3) for Regulated Clinical Research Information Management (RCRIM) WG of DESD (Project Insight ID=539). The RPS R3 project builds on the focus defined in RPS R1 and RPS R2 of the United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) requirements to meet Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) IV electronic submission commitments. RPS R3 expands on the R2 requirements and aims to complete the definition of the message standard to support the additional global regulatory product submissions.
- Detailed Clinical Models Release 1 by Patient Care WG of DESD. (Project Insight ID=320). This project scope was revised to create and maintain in a repository a set of detailed clinical models that can be transformed from a generic model into EHR profile, HL7 templates, V3 Clinical Statements (for use in O&O, CDA, PC R-MIMs), and that can function in ISO 13606 and OpenEHR series of standards.

Other Approvals

- Out-of-cycle meeting approval for RIMBAA: March 11, 2010 at Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam (the Netherlands). This one-day out-of-cycle meeting focuses on HL7 version 3 implementation experiences and the use of RIM-based models within software applications. The out-of-cycle meeting is held in addition to the regular meetings of the RIMBAA WG during the Working Group Meetings.

For any additions, updates or suggestions on any of these TSC promoted initiatives please contact Lynn Laakso (lynn@hl7.org).

Viewing Projects and Accessing the TSC Issue Tracker

To view Projects:

- Go to Project Insight at: <http://healthlevelseven.projectinsight.net> (this requires a PMO assigned login) OR
- Go to the searchable Project Database by [clicking here](#) OR
- The new URL for the Project List on GForge is by <http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/tsc/frs/>.

To Access the TSC Issue Tracker, the URL for the new GForge is at http://gforge.hl7.org/gf/project/tsc/tracker/?action=TrackerItemBrowse&tracker_id=313.



Immunization – The Road to Normative Content

By Joginder Madra

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A few years ago, a decision was made to consolidate all of the HL7 immunization-related activities and give them a new home in the Public Health and Emergency Response work group (PHER). Since that time, PHER has been the focal point of immunization-related activity with participants and contributors from Canada, US and Europe. Some of the key activities of this group include:

- Development of an Immunization Domain Analysis Model (targeted for ballot later

this year)

- Development of Version 3 immunization message artifacts (currently in DSTU and targeted for normative ballot later this year)
- Development of an HL7 Version 2.5.1 Implementation Guide (balloted for comment in the January 2010 cycle)
- Cross-work group harmonization efforts – including dedicated quarters at each Working Group Meeting

The Version 3 immunization projects will have their DSTU status expire soon (May 2010 for Immunization Administration R1 and September 2010 for Immunization Administration R2). Work will begin shortly on consolidating feedback and preparing for normative ballot. As stands, it is anticipated that the scope for normative balloting will include messages for:

- Recording an immunization event in an Electronic Health Record or Immunization Registry System
- Updating a previously recorded immunization event in an Electronic Health Record or Immunization Registry System
- Querying for a list of immunization events
- Querying for full details about one identified immunization event
- Querying for a patient's immunization status and recommendation

If you are interested in aiding the development of normative HL7 Version 3 immunization content, please join us on the PHER list - pher@lists.hl7.org in helping to make this the most coherent and useful Normative Edition yet!

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