

**HL7 International**  
**Organizational Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**  
October 2, 2019

**Policy Statement**

- HL7 International and its Affiliates reaffirm their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion across the entire organization, as a key strategic business priority and driver that is essential to pursuing and maintaining the highest quality and most efficient and effective product and service development and delivery, and the status as a best place to be a member and to work.

**Purpose**

- The purpose of this organizational statement is to affirm HL7 International and its Affiliates' commitment to and focus on diversity, equity and inclusion as core organizational values.

**Scope and Coverage**

- This organizational statement applies to all HL7 International internal activities, its Board, contracted employees, members, Affiliates, and participants.

**Provisions**

HL7 has long operated under a published Code of Ethics, which is articulated in its [Governance and Operations Manual](#)), and more recently published a [Code of Conduct](#). Both statements underscore the organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Taken together they address the following five components:

- **People:** HL7 International utilizes the full potential of the organization's most valuable diversity asset, the people of HL7.
- **Work Environment:** HL7 International maintains a work environment that embraces diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the entire organization, which fosters creativity and innovation.
- **Defining Characteristics:** Fairness and equity are defining characteristics of the HL7 International work environment. Discrimination and harassment are not tolerated or condoned, in accordance with the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies.
- **Integration:** HL7 International strives to integrate its diversity, equity and inclusion strategy into its core organizational and operational activities, and all aspects of the development of its products and services.
- **Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:** HL7 International leverages its rich diversity of people and enduring commitment to inclusion in order to remain a leader in the development of international health care interoperability standards and services.

**Pillars of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy**

HL7 International's diversity, equity and inclusion strategy, developed and approved by the Board of Directors, is founded on "Four Pillars": (1) Services, (2) Workforce, (3) Industry and Community Partnerships, and (4) Diversity and Inclusion Compliance.

- Services: Provide the best services to its members, participants and customers, eliminating disparities and fostering equity.
- Workforce: Optimize diversity representation at every level including the HL7 Board of Directors, staff, contracted personnel, Work Group and Committee co-chairs, and all other levels of organizational leadership to create an inclusive workplace environment to optimize all talent potential.
- Industry and Community Partnerships: Collaborate with a diverse group of stakeholders and organizations to create standard that advance our interoperability goals.
- Diversity and Inclusion Compliance: Enable a process for confidential reporting and receipt of response to perceived violations of this policy.

## **Governance**

- Ensuring implementation of HL7 International's diversity, equity and inclusion strategy is the responsibility of the following:
  - HL7 International Board of Directors: develops, approves, and oversees ongoing implementation of the diversity, equity and inclusion policy and strategy
  - HL7 International Executive Team: operationalizes implementation of policy and strategy at all levels of the organization
  - Affiliates: Carry forward policy and strategy, customized to the national needs, culture and laws
  - Leadership of Committees, Workgroups, Councils, and other HL7 International organizational units: fulfill the policy at their respective levels
  - Members, participants and customers: are empowered to report perceived violations of this policy to the Current Chair of HL7 International at [Ethics@HL7.org](mailto:Ethics@HL7.org).

## Appendix

### Definitions

- **Diversity:** The wide range of differences and similarities that exist among people and which make each of us unique. It includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the various characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. Our definition also includes diversity of thought: ideas, perspectives, and values. We also recognize that individuals affiliate with multiple identities.
- **Equity:** The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.
- **Inclusion:** Proactive behaviors based on self-awareness and respect for differences that make each person feel valued for his/her abilities and a part of the organization. It is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is, by definition, diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or 'implicit bias' helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.
- **Cross Cultural Adaptiveness:** A capability that facilitates personalization of care and service.
- **Cultural Humility:** An underlying requirement to learning and a willingness to adapt and be relevant.
- **Unconscious Bias:** Unchallenged preferences formed by socialization, experience, and instinct which impact our assessments and decisions.