Health Level Seven and America’s Blood Centers Announces Plan to Extend Standard and Provide Implementation Guidance into Blood Banking

Ann Arbor, Michigan – September 26, 2011 – Health Level Seven® (HL7®) International, the global authority on standards for interoperability of health information technology with members in 55 countries, and America’s Blood Centers, a national association of independent, community blood centers, today announced the approval of a plan to extend the HL7 standard to support the blood center environment.

The HL7 Orders and Observations Work Group balloted and passed the final version of the HL7 Version 2.6 Implementation Guide: Blood Bank Donation Services, Release 1, after an initial round of balloting in May. During the HL7's 25th Annual Plenary and Working Group Meeting in San Diego, California (Sept. 11-16, 2011) the decision was made to clear this version for publication. Once published, the guide can be accessed under the “Version 2.x Messaging Standard – Version 2.x Informative Documents” section of the HL7 Standards page on the HL7.org website.

The HL7 Version 2.6 Implementation Guide: Blood Bank Donation Services, informally called Blood Banking HL7 (BBHL7), was developed by a multidisciplinary project team over two years. The project team is composed of standards experts, blood center IT and operations personnel, and representatives of blood establishment computer software (BECS) vendors. The team receives staff and marketing support from America’s Blood Centers and has been co-funded by the Foundation for America’s Blood Centers and Blood Systems.

“This significant achievement is the result of tireless work by a talented group of people,” said Jonathan Harber, CIO and vice president of Information Technology for Blood Systems, who serves as chairman of the project team. “We believe that standardization will bring a return on investment for both blood centers
and the software firms that market to them,” Mr. Harber said. “Without standardization, there would be no debit cards or online payments. Similarly, BBHL7 will make possible a host of new efficiencies and innovations.”

HL7 Board member and co-chair of the Orders and Observation Work Group Hans Buitendijk said “We are looking forward to continuing efforts with the BBHL7 project team, to establish, enhance, and promote interoperability with blood bank systems through the use of HL7 standards.”

**About the HL7 SIG**

The HL7 SIG was organized by America’s Blood Centers, which also provides staff and marketing support. The SIG is composed of representatives from BBCS; BloodCenter of Wisconsin; Blood Systems; Carter BloodCare; Fenwal; Florida Blood Services; Group Health Cooperative; GPI; Haemonetics; Healthcare-ID; ICCBBA; ITSynergistics; Kaiser Permanente; Mediware; New York Blood Center; and Puget Sound Blood Center.

**About HL7**

Founded in 1987, Health Level Seven International is the global authority for healthcare information interoperability and standards with affiliates established in more than 30 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; Allscripts; Booz Allen Hamilton; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Duke Translational Medicine Institute; Epic; European Medicines Agency; the Food and Drug Administration; GE Healthcare Information Technologies; GlaxoSmithKline; Hospital Corporation American (HCA); 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, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.
For more information, please visit: www.HL7.org