



HL7 and IHTSDO Strengthen Collaboration

Close coordination will facilitate adoption of standards-based healthcare implementations

Ann Arbor, MI, USA and Copenhagen, Denmark – September 23, 2014 – Health Level Seven

International (HL7) and IHTSDO today announced a two-year agreement to support the adoption of working practices that facilitate the use of IHTSDO standards with HL7 standards. This new agreement expands their collaborative relationship that began in 2009 and aims to improve healthcare on a global scale by advancing interoperability efforts.

As part of the new agreement, HL7 and the IHTSDO will collaborate on targeted work to further support implementation of SNOMED CT in HL7 products. SNOMED CT is owned, maintained and distributed by the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO).

The collaboration will focus on supporting international activities within a number of key areas of work:

- Clear statement on the licensing arrangements for use of SNOMED CT in HL7 products based on IHTSDO policy
- Facilitate and promote the use of SNOMED CT within HL7 products by developing and agreeing on solutions for a consistent approach for implementing SNOMED CT in HL7 artifacts that can be adopted by the development teams nationally and internationally.
- HL7 will explore the use of IHTSDO Open Tool Framework to review SNOMED CT and create value sets against defined requirements. This will provide HL7 an understanding of the options of either using or enhancing the source code for its own purposes, or entering into an agreement for a service provision.
- Jointly agree upon a program to provide the HL7 community with education on SNOMED CT and its application in order to effectively implement SNOMED CT in HL7 products.

According to IHTSDO's CEO Don Sweete, "This agreement signifies the commitment of both IHTSDO and HL7 to continue working together to help solve the issues of semantic interoperability. This work will allow easier movement of structured data through the use of value sets that will continue to be developed by both parties."

Dr. Charles Jaffe, CEO at HL7, added: "HL7 is committed to working with IHTSDO and other standards bodies in order to achieve interoperability on a global scale. Collaborations such as these are critical to advancing the delivery of safe and effective healthcare. By making it easier to incorporate SNOMED CT within HL7 products, this agreement will further facilitate the adoption and implementation of international standards-based healthcare solutions."

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Notes to the editor

As international standards bodies, HL7 and IHTSDO, International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation, share a goal of developing and provisioning standards for the exchange of interoperable clinical and related health information.

The collaborative effort between IHTSDO and HL7 began in March 2009 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organizations and expanded in 2011 to focus on SNOMED CT usage in HL7 artifacts.

About Health Level Seven International (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 2,000 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. For more information, please visit: www.HL7.org

About IHTSDO

IHTSDO – The International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation – determines global standards for health terms in order to support the safe, accurate, and effective exchange of health information - an essential part of improving health for humankind. Our experts work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to ensure SNOMED CT, our world leading terminology product, is accepted as the common global language for health terms, meeting the expectations of the quality-focused international medical profession, within a fast moving health care sector. On a non-for profit basis we are committed to maintain and grow our leadership as the global experts in healthcare terminology. For more information, please visit www.ihtsdo.org

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