



# Interchange

**News from the Inforoute Standards Collaborative and Solution Architecture Group**

## Wishes coming true in standards and architecture area



Welcome to the Summer 2007 edition of *Interchange*. This issue is packed with reports about all the standards and architecture work that is gathering momentum across Canada. For the Standards Collaborative (SC), the biggest news is that the SNOMED CT® (Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine–Clinical Terms) standard is now available to SC members due to

*Inforoute's* involvement in SNOMED CT®'s parent organization, the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization (IHTSDO) where *Inforoute* acts as Canada's representative. This is a key EHR standard and *Inforoute* is honored to be involved in bringing it to Canada. (Please see page 2 for more details)

Another Partnership conference is coming up in the fall in Halifax so mark your calendars. Those of you who attended the Partnership conference we held a year ago will recall that in my talk I mentioned my four wishes for the standards area:

1. To be known internationally as a leader in standards development and maintenance with streamlined strategy, governance and processes;
2. To be known internationally as a recognized leader in standards coordination and collaboration;
3. To achieve a harmonized view of standards across SDOs - from requirements to implementation; and
4. To secure sustainable funding for ongoing and new needs for standards and architecture initiatives.

I think we have great progress towards my first three wishes. Towards the first two wishes, the Inforoute Standards Collaborative has been up and running for over 16 months now. We have a fully integrated governance structure that enables us to work across all of our strategic Standards Development Organizations (SDOs), including the new international health terminologies SDO. We have integrated strategies and streamlined processes. We have one

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communications newsletter, *Interchange*, one membership for access to all of our services and intellectual property we have to protect on behalf of the SDOs, including SNOMED CT, and more to be announced shortly.

Our partnerships with various SDOs, in Canada and internationally make us the envy of other countries. Several Canadians and like-minded colleagues in other countries have advanced the approach to harmonize the work at HL7, CEN, ISO and other SDOs. The international community is coming up to speed on thinking in an integrated fashion, beginning to fulfill the third wish. So, needless to say, I am very optimistic. Thanks so much to all of you for making this possible. *Inforoute* is just the custodian for these efforts. None of it would be possible without the participation of all of our stakeholders on our committees, project teams and those contributing to our public reviews – especially those who volunteer their time.

Let me give you a sense of the investments we have made so far: On the architecture front we have 12 completed or in process projects with a total investment to date of \$8.5M. On the standards front we have 20 completed or in process projects with a total investment to date of \$33M. In addition we have dedicated another \$9M towards liaison with SDOs, support and maintenance of the standards, and services to our stakeholders. That is a total of nearly \$51M and we still have more to do. But more important than the money is the stakeholder buy-in we have – clinicians, public sector and private sector.

Now as for the last wish – funding. I hope you agree that the Standards Collaborative after its first year is serving your needs. I hope we will continue to earn your trust and confidence over the next year of our two-year mandate. To that point, this is a mandate we would like to continue with longer term. In addition, we are committed to finding the funding that will fund the continuation of this mandate. If you have any influence over funding decision-makers, then we would appreciate your support.

I encourage all readers to share this issue of *Interchange* with others who would be interested in the contents. If you have an item to suggest or an article to submit, please see page 11 for our subscription and submission information.

And now – read on for detailed updates on all of our exciting developments and progress.

Dennis Giokas  
Chief Technology Officer  
Canada Health Infoway

## SNOMED CT® available in Canada

The *Infoway* Standards Collaborative is pleased to announce that the Systematized Nomenclature of MEDicine Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT®) standard is now accessible to its members.

Through Canada Health Infoway, Canada is one of the nine charter nations which established the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization (IHTSDO) to acquire SNOMED CT® from the College of American Pathologists. Other charter nations include Australia, Denmark, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. By acquiring the standard, *Infoway* and its IHTSDO charter nation partners are ensuring the sustained maintenance, development, quality assurance and distribution of SNOMED CT® on a global scale.

The January 2007 and July 2006 SNOMED CT® "Core" releases, previously created by the College of American

Pathologists are now available at no additional cost to SC members in good standing. These SNOMED CT® content files are provided as tab-delimited flat files which can be imported into any database or other software application. Members are asked to sign in to the *Infoway* Passport, then to read and accept the license agreement before accessing the releases.

The SNOMED CT® core release files for July 2007 are currently undergoing beta testing and quality assurance review. The alpha release should be available from the IHTSDO for the *Infoway* Standards Collaborative and the other charter nations at the end of August.

Through the IHTSDO, *Infoway* is also working diligently to investigate the provision of a browser to view SNOMED CT® and support its optimal use in an economical fashion. Watch for forthcoming announcements as to developments and decisions on this topic.

*Infoway's* Standards Collaborative is the designated National Product Centre for SNOMED CT® in Canada. National Product Centres are being established by IHTSDO charter nations to provide a single, central point within respective member jurisdictions to:

- Provide an interface with the IHTSDO and National Product Centres in other member countries;
- Provide an interface for all entities within the member's territory who have an interest in the products or business of the IHTSDO; and
- Have responsibility for distribution and support of the IHTSDO's Terminology Products within each member country.

In Canada, *Infoway's* Standards Collaborative will oversee distribution of SNOMED CT® according to the IHTSDO-defined Articles of Association and licensing agreement finalized to support use in the Canadian context.

Approximately twice a year, IHTSDO will provide an "international" release which includes the core standard, IHTSDO specifications and other pertinent documents.

For more information, read the License Agreement or the FAQs online or contact the *Infoway* Standards Collaborative Infodesk at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca)

## Standards Collaborative Updates

*The following are updates from the SC service sectors.*

### Standards Collaborative Governance and Working Group Updates

Significant progress has been made recently with regards to operationalizing the new streamlined governance structure for

the SC, including the following:

- All of the committees in the SC Governance Model have been successfully launched, including the Standards Collaborative Coordinating Committee - Technical and Clinical Sub-Committees that were launched on June 26, 2007.
- The roles and responsibilities of the HL7 Canada Board and Committees are being transferred to the SC Governance structure as approved in the HL7 Canada and SC Governance Ballot.
- The detailed mapping of roles and responsibilities of the ISO CAC/TC 215/Z295 Committee with the SC governance structure have been approved and transition activities are underway.

Work has also progressed on operationalizing the Standards Collaborative Working Groups (SCWGs) to provide pan-Canadian recommendations on the adoption and use of standards and to review and vote on the content of health information standards.

In addition to the launch of four interim SCWGs at the Partnership Conference in Calgary (May 16-18, 2007), the SC team has worked in consultation with the SC governance committees and standards stakeholders to define the SCWG framework. The Standards Collaborative Strategic Committee (SCSC) will be reviewing the proposed SCWG framework at their upcoming meeting in August and, with their approval, work will proceed with plans for transitioning to the approved SCWG framework. One component of operationalizing the approved SCWG framework will include formal elections for the SCWG elected positions. These elections are targeted to be conducted in the August/September timeframe.

Further information will be provided to the SC membership as this work progresses, including a call to the membership for an expression of interest in the elected SCWG positions.

For further information about activities in any of the SC governance committees or working groups, please refer to the various forums available at <http://knowledge.infoway-inforoute.ca> or email the SC Infodesk at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca).

— *Contributed by Marsha Bryan*

### SC Launches Maintenance Release

The first Standards Collaborative (SC) Scheduled Maintenance Release Process was launched on April 25, 2007. The SC Scheduled Maintenance Release Process will result in revised Stable for Use standards for Client Registry, Provider Registry, and Canadian Electronic Drug Messaging (CeRx), as well as portions of the National E-Claims Standard (NeCST). During the month of June, Drug, Registry and Financial

Management Standards Collaborative Working Groups (SCWG) reviewed items (i.e., change requests) that were proposed for inclusion in the Fall 2007 Scheduled Maintenance Release.

Draft Release Materials were published to the SC web forums in July. Draft Release Materials will be subject to an Open Review by SC members targeted to open August 1, 2007, and close September 10, 2007. All comments received during the Open Review will be discussed and agreed to by the appropriate SCWG during September. New releases of the standards are targeted for distribution by October 31, 2007.

For more information on the SC Scheduled Maintenance Release, please contact [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca). For more information on the SCWGs, please visit:

[Drug SCWG - http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/DSCWG/Registries](http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/DSCWG/Registries)  
[Registries SCWG - http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/RSCWG/](http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/RSCWG/)  
[Financial Management SCWG - http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/FSCWG/](http://forums.infoway-inforoute.ca/FSCWG/)

— *Contributed by Shari Dworkin*

### Membership drive successful

The 2007-2008 Standards Collaborative membership campaign, featuring the new consolidated membership model, has been very successful.

The campaign so far has attracted over 300 members, representing 100 organizations and individuals from across Canada. Just a few of the benefits enjoyed by the SC membership include:

- Access to a full array of licensed standards including HL7, SNOMED CT® and DICOM.
- Voting Rights on content and reconciliation of standards as well as on Canadian SDO (Standards Development Organization) Representatives;
- Education and Training Services for HL7, SNOMED CT®, ISO/TC 215 and other health information standards;
- Implementation, Maintenance, and Conformance Services; and
- Knowledge Management, Benefits Evaluation and a thorough array of other standards process services

We would like to thank all the SC members 2007-2008 for their participation and invaluable contributions so far. As well, we invite those who have not yet joined to contact the Standards Information Desk at [standards@Infoway-Inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@Infoway-Inforoute.ca) for more information. We look forward to your participation.

— *Contributed by June Seepersad*

## pan-Canadian Laboratory Messaging and Nomenclature (pCLMN) Standard “Stable for Use” Update

The Standards Collaborative Strategic Committee recently approved the pan-Canadian Laboratory Messaging and Nomenclature (pCLMN) specification as an “EHR Information Standard – Stable for Use.” This important step now paves the way to initiate various finalization tasks ranging from the development of sample message instances to French translation of the Implementation Guide and Nomenclature Overview documents, as well as of the LOINC® -based (Logical Observations Identifiers, Names, Codes) pan-Canadian Laboratory Observation Code Database (pCLOCD). While initial translation of documents was expected to be completed during the summer, the more extensive task of translating the pCLOCD is scheduled to be complete by November.

In all other aspects, the specifications are now ready and stable for early adopters. This now allows provinces and territories contemplating the development or expansion of jurisdictional laboratory information systems to use a truly pan-Canadian specification for laboratory data interchange. As with other “Stable for Use” specifications, it will be essential to gather and capture technical and clinical feedback from early adopters and to incorporate such feedback into the specifications as these make their journey towards final normative stage.

Potential implementers and other stakeholders who are members of the *Infoway* Standards Collaborative are encouraged to access the specifications through the Laboratory forum on Infoway’s KnowledgeWay at <http://knowledge.infoway-inforoute.ca>.

For further information about the finalization work, please contact Marc Koehn at [mkoehn@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:mkoehn@infoway-inforoute.ca). For support queries please contact [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca) or engage in discussions with other early adopters through the [Labs-Discuss@forums.infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:Labs-Discuss@forums.infoway-inforoute.ca) forum.

— *Contributed by Marc Koehn*

## Pan-Canadian Public Health Surveillance Standards – Summer Update

The Public Health Surveillance (PHS) standards project is very pleased to report it has now published for review the implementable specifications for all transactions within the currently planned project scope. This includes messaging pertaining to the following topic areas:

	Topic
Stable for Use candidates	Immunization
	Adverse Event Reporting
	ADT (Admit, Discharge, Transfer)
	Drug Queries
Draft Spec.	Case, Outbreak, Investigations
	(EHR) Event Tracking (Publication of iEHR work products)
	Service Delivery Location (Minor additions to iEHR transactions)
	Discharge Care Summary (Minor additions to iEHR transactions)

The “Stable for Use” review period for the associated candidate transactions was formally launched on July 3 and is scheduled to close September 3, 2007. It invites review and comment from all interested stakeholders and is a critical part of the EHR standards approval journey. Given the inclusion of ADT messages to support the capture of selected ADT events through the EHR for Public Health Surveillance systems, it is particularly important to gain feedback from stakeholders familiar with the associated systems and current ADT interfaces. Reviewers can access the “Stable for Use” review materials through the PHS forum on *Infoway’s* KnowledgeWay at <http://knowledge.infoway-inforoute.ca> and are invited to engage in the associated dialog through the PHS discussion forum at [PHS-Discuss@forums.infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:PHS-Discuss@forums.infoway-inforoute.ca).

Transactions within the Case, Outbreak and Investigations topic remain to be refined in collaboration with the Panorama Project, which, as many readers may be aware, is developing a pan-Canadian Public Health Surveillance reference implementation. Subject to the outcome of this work and, under the guidance of the PHS-pan-Canadian Standards Group (pCSG), one or more transactions within this topic area may be put forward for “Stable for Use” through a subsequent review cycle.

The remaining transactions published reflect the progression of work previously initiated through the iEHR standards project. It is anticipated that the associated specification materials will be sent to the EHR Standards Collaborative Working Group (SCWG) as draft materials for further review and potential SFU progression when the Public Health Surveillance Standards project formally winds down.

Comments and feedback are, of course, invited on all of the above materials. For further information about the PHS standards project and the current “Stable for Use” review process, please contact Marc Koehn at [mkoehn@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:mkoehn@infoway-inforoute.ca).

— *Contributed by Marc Koehn*

## Spring 2007 partnership recap

*Blazing the Trail*— the Partnership for Health Information Standards conference held in Calgary May 16-18 was a huge success. Over 160 participants, including vendors, consultants, students, healthcare professionals and subject matter experts, gathered in Calgary to advance Canada's health information standards efforts.

The key highlight of the conference was the launch of four interim Standards Collaborative Working Groups (SCWGs) for Drugs, Financial Management, Registries and Electronic Health Records. The SCWGs allowed conference attendees to break out into their areas of interest and engage in discussions regarding the draft terms of reference, decision-making processes and how to achieve quorum for the respective

SCWGs. Several in-development standards were also deliberated and progressed. During the course of the meetings, interim co-chairs and technical representatives for the SCWGs were also elected as follows to support the Standards Collaborative subject matter expert assigned to provide interim co-chair support to these SCWGs:

- Registries: Allie Grassie and Andrew Cripps
- Drugs: George Power and Jean Duteau
- Financial Management: Akos Hoffer and Anne Belford
- EHR: Kelly Abrams and Oskar Andressen

In addition, the Partnership featured keynote presentations by Dr. Charles Jaffe (CEO, HL7 Inc.) and Dr. John Conly (Regional Chair, Department of Medicine, University of Calgary and Calgary Health Region). Dr. Jaffe presented his perspectives on the evolution of the HL7 organization and its engagement with its stakeholders. Dr. Conly shared the particular experiences of the Calgary Health Region with its recent EMR implementation, offering informed insights on how health informatics is changing Canadian health care.

The Spring Partnership continued to provide educational opportunities to attendees by hosting tutorials for SNOMED CT®, LOINC and HL7 versions 2 and 3. All tutorials received extremely positive feedback from the participants. The HL7 V2.5 Certification exam was well-attended and had great success rates.

An evaluation survey was completed by conference attendees after the conference to measure their satisfaction and to incorporate suggestions for future conferences. Overall, the feedback from participants was very positive and we look forward to extend this success to future conferences. We thank all presenters, moderators, facilitators and, most importantly, attendees for making *Blazing the Trail* a great success. We hope to see you again in Halifax for the fall 2007 Conference.

All presentations and materials for the Spring 2007 conference are posted on the Conference page at [http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/disppage.asp?cw\\_page=event\\_partner\\_may07\\_e](http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/disppage.asp?cw_page=event_partner_may07_e). Some materials related to the SCWGs are still under development and will be updated shortly.

Questions regarding the Partnership for Health Information Standards can be directed to [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca).  
— *Contributed by Priya Kekre*

## HL7 Summer Updates

### Successful HL7 v2.5 Certificate Candidates

HL7 Canada is pleased to congratulate the most recent recipients who have earned their HL7 V2.5 Certification:

## Fall Partnership Conference

Mark your calendars and join us this fall for the Partnership for Health Information Standards from



October 30 to November 1 at the Marriott Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Plans are underway for an exciting event that will include the Standards Collaborative Working Group (SCWG) deliberations, constituency

meetings for HL7 Canada, ISO TC 215, and SNOMED CT® and LOINC, and a host of informative presentations from experts and leaders across the country. New to the Partnership Conference will be two new SCWGs, Infrastructure and Architecture, and Privacy and Security, where the EHR Index, transport level interoperability, consent and authentication registries are a few of the proposed topics for discussion.

In addition, the conference will feature the Standards Collaborative InfoFair, highlighting the latest innovations in standards by the private and public sectors. Join us for a dinner and a thrilling evening show of mystery and mirth to celebrate Halloween on October 31st.

Please visit our website [http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/disppage.asp?cw\\_page=partner\\_may07\\_e](http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/disppage.asp?cw_page=partner_may07_e) in the coming weeks for more information about this exciting event in the world of health informatics! Should you wish to contact us, please call us at toll free number 1-877-595-3417 or write to us at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca)

— *Contributed by Linda Monico*

- Sandra A. Albers
- Karla Avery
- Chun-Hao Chang
- Chris J. Elias
- Brian Harshenin
- Vikas B. Jangam
- Marc Levesque
- David Mah
- Jacy Reyes
- Vipin N. Savai
- Hao Trinh
- Ming Zhang

For more information on HL7 certification testing, please visit the HL7 Certification website at: [http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/DispPage.asp?cw\\_page=infostand\\_hl7can\\_certification\\_e](http://sl.infoway-inforoute.ca/content/DispPage.asp?cw_page=infostand_hl7can_certification_e) or contact us at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca).

### HL7 Canada Transition to the Standards Collaborative Governance Model

As many of you are aware, HL7 Canada has approved the transition of the HL7 Canada Affiliate to the new Standards Collaborative (SC) Governance Model.

As such, existing HL7 Canada committees are also transferring their activities to the new SC. The HL7 Canada Communications Committee and Financial Management Domain Committee were already transitioned in June, while the Realm Localization Committee is completing its activities over the coming weeks/months.

The HL7 Canada Board will remain in effect until all transition activities are complete.

As part of the transition to the new SC Governance Model, HL7 Canada is represented through three positions:

- HL7 Canada Head of Delegation, sitting on the Standards Collaborative Strategic Committee (SCSC) and Standards Collaborative Coordinating Committee (SCCC);
- HL7 Canada Clinical Sub-Committee (TSC) Representative; and
- HL7 Canada Technical Sub-Committee (TSC) Representative.

These positions have been filled on an interim position by Michael van Campen, Garry Cruickshank and Lloyd McKenzie, respectively. Elections will be held over the coming months, prior to the Partnership meeting at the end of October, so if you have an interest in any of these three positions, please contact the HL7 Canada Secretariat at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca).

### HL7 Canada Balloting

Through the HL7 Canada Realm Localization Committee,

public ballot disposition of *Infoway's* Cross Project Harmonization Initiative (XProject) ballot comments has recently been completed. Message wrappers had no substantive changes, but there were three substantive changes to Common Message Element Types (CMETs) and a number of minor, substantive changes to data types. Look for the affected CMETs and data types to be re-balloted under the new SC Governance Model in the coming months.

### HL7 International Ballots

HL7 Canada hosted the HL7 International Out-of-Cycle July Ballot July 3-August 2 on the Role-based Access Control Healthcare Permission Catalogue. Results of Canadian submissions will be deliberated on at the HL7 Working Group Meeting following the close of the ballot cycle at the September 2007 Working Group Meeting in Atlanta.

HL7 Canada is also hosting the upcoming HL7 International September ballot cycle which was scheduled to commence no earlier than August 8 and run through September 6. Results of Canadian submissions will be deliberated on at the HL7 Working Group Meeting in Atlanta following the close of the ballot cycle. We look forward to your submission of comments and feedback.

Please visit the HL7 Canada Ballot Homepage to access ballot materials and submit your comments.

### HL7 Working Group Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia

The upcoming HL7 Working Group meeting will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, September 16 – 21, 2007. If you plan to attend, please contact the HL7 Canada Secretariat so we can plan our support for the HL7 Canada delegation. To register for the conference, please visit [www.hl7.org](http://www.hl7.org). For more details on the Working Group Meeting, please contact the HL7 Canada Secretariat at [standards@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:standards@infoway-inforoute.ca).

— *Contributed by Wendy Huang, Grant Gillis and Michael van Campen, Interim Head of delegation of HL7 Canada.*

## DICOM standards

The DICOM Standards Committee exists to create and maintain international standards for communication of biomedical diagnostic and therapeutic information in disciplines that use digital images and associated data. The goals of DICOM are to achieve compatibility and to improve workflow efficiency between imaging systems and other information systems in healthcare environments worldwide.

Those interested in imaging (DICOM) standards and who wish to participate in the work of DICOM, including ballots of the standard, are urged to contact Grant Gillis at Canada Health Infoway ([ggillis@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:ggillis@infoway-inforoute.ca)).

## News from CIHI

### Why Are The Simple Questions the Hardest To Answer?

The question is a very simple one: “Is this EHR standard relevant to our core business?” However, if you’ve ever been asked it, then you know that providing a definitive answer is not so simple. For an organization as large and multifaceted as the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), the challenge in answering this question is twofold. First, it requires us to form an enterprise view of our core business. Secondly, we must find the right mix of expertise for reviewing and assessing the given standard in the context of CIHI’s vision for the future.

### Enterprise View of our Data

In January 2007, the CIHI Data Dictionary (DD) project was expanded to include the development of the CIHI Reference Data Model (CRDM) as part of an effort to build a more integrated view of CIHI’s data. The combined DD/CRDM initiative supports CIHI’s vision of an enterprise architecture solution for managing and storing information. It is anticipated that these products will provide a “one stop shop” for viewing and understanding CIHI’s core data. As the CRDM and DD evolve, it will become that much easier for CIHI to determine how well a standard fits with our core business.

### Assessing the Standards

In order to establish expertise in understanding EHR standards—particularly as they grow in size and complexity—this summer, CIHI has launched an internal standard working group, consisting of staff with diverse backgrounds and skill sets. Working together, this group will participate in the pan-Canadian SCWGs and provide direction in answering questions about the impact of pan-Canadian EHR standards.

In the coming years, pan-Canadian EHR standards will be increasingly important to CIHI. For this reason, CIHI is taking steps towards answering key questions regarding alignment of our work with the pan-Canadian EHR. In doing this, CIHI is committed to working with Canada Health Infoway towards the establishment of pan-Canadian EHR standards.

— *Contributed by the Standards Development Coordination Department, CIHI.*

## IHE Updates

### Attendance high for IHE Workshop 2007

The primary focus of the Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) Workshop 2007 was the IHE’s role in improving healthcare interoperability and realizing the vision of a connected health system. The attendees included vendor representatives, healthcare providers, public health experts and consultants. In total, some 160 people attended the workshop.

Each day started with the general session and roundtable discussions followed by a series of parallel tracks to cover topics in several domains, including IT infrastructure, Patient Care Coordination, Radiology, Cardiology, Eye Care, Radiation Oncology, and Lab. The scope of work undertaken by IHE is expanding rapidly in terms of new domains (Patient Care Devices, Information Quality, Pharmacy, Pathology, Endoscopy, and Veterinary) and new and expanded integration profiles, some of which are domain-specific and some are cross-departmental and cross-institutional.

The workshop was well organized and the presentations and discussions were top-notch. The topic I presented (titled “Achieving Diagnostic Imaging Data Sharing”), covered the XDS-based Alberta Diagnostic Imaging Affinity Domain solution integrated with the Client and Provider Registries, and the provincial EHR, in the context of the pan-Canadian EHR initiative, the Standards Collaborative. The presentation was received very well. Most of the questions were about the challenges associated with the integration of the XDS components with the EHR services, data quality and integrity, and implementation of workflow policies.

*Infoway* was mentioned by many speakers in a very positive context, specifically, its business model, commitment to standards and approach to the development and adoption of interoperable electronic health information systems. However, a broader representation of the Canadian organizations would assist in both the adoption of the IHE integration profiles in the Canadian health sector and promotion of the *Infoway* initiatives domestically and internationally. For more information please go to:

<http://www.ihe.net/Participation/iheworkshop2007.cfm>

— *Contributed by Eugene Igras*

### IHE governance model under review

IHE Canada is completing its governance model review and is positioned for the official role as the Canadian National Deployment Committee for IHE International. We are also in discussions with a national organization to serve as the IHE Canada primary sponsor. Most importantly, we are seeking to expand our membership.

After the tremendous interest in the three web education sessions offered in June, we are planning additional education events for the summer and fall. Along with offering overviews of IHE profiles, we are seeking to offer in-depth sessions on specific profiles and coordinate a “course” to become a referee at the next North American IHE Connectathon. Finally, the second annual IHE Canada education workshop will be held October 15 – 16 in Montreal, Quebec. Details of all of these events will be posted, as they are confirmed, at:

<http://wiki.ihe.net/index.php?title=Canada>.

— *Contributed by Yaron Dermon*

## ISO activities

### ISO/TC215 –Health Informatics Canadian Leadership Grows

The strength of Canadian participation in ISO/TC215 –Health Informatics, continues to grow, and is reflected in key leadership positions, elected or confirmed during the Annual Plenary, held in Montréal, March 26-29. Canadians now holding formal officer positions include: Grant Gillis (Canada Health Infoway), WG1–Data Structure Convener; Kathryn Hannah Ph.D. (HECS, Inc.), WG3 –Semantic Content Vice-Convener; Ross Fraser (Sextant Software), WG4 –Security Convener; Marion Lyver M.D., WG8 –Business Requirements For Electronic Health Records Vice-Convener; and Don Newsham (COACH/Sierra Systems), Standards Development Organization Harmonization Joint Working Group Convener.

Canadians are also providing leadership in the development of a variety of critical work items, including:

- ISO/TS 29585 –Deployment of a Clinical Data Warehouse (CDW), led internationally by Andrew Grant M.D. Ph.D. of the Université de Sherbrooke, and domestically by Mark Fuller of the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). This technical specification provides CDW implementation guidance which will, in turn, support effective decision-making, and improve quality of care.
- Neil Gardner (Saskatchewan Health) is working closely with the Australian Project Lead on the technical specification, ISO/TS 27527 - Provider Identification. This document acts as a consolidation of best practices, principles and guidelines for the collection and storage of healthcare provider identification data.
- Beverly Knight (Canada Health Infoway) is leading the development of two new work items, Principles and guidelines for the maintenance of terminological systems and principles and guidelines for the measurement of conformance of the use of terminological systems. Both documents are proposed technical reports and will provide best practices and framework guidance.
- Ross Fraser (Sextant Software) is leading the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) 27799 - Information Security Management in Health using ISO/IEC 17799 development, which provides guidance on how best to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of personal health information with the implementation of ISO/IEC 17799.
- Marion Lyver M.D. is co-leading international activity on the ISO Technical Report (TR) – Business Requirements for Health Summary Records, with Australia. This TR describes and defines health summary records (HSRs) and

summarizes the business requirements driving their development and the associated issues.

Progress on these, and other important initiatives, will continue to advance during the ISO/TC215 Brisbane Joint Working Group meetings, August 27-29, 2007.

This Canadian engagement at the international level provides an opportunity to influence standards development activity which, in turn, makes the future Canadian adoption process more efficient as Canadian needs will have already been addressed.

For more information on ISO/TC215 activity, please contact Andrea Ciemny, Standards Analyst, ISO ([aciemny@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:aciemny@infoway-inforoute.ca)) or Grant Gillis, Director, Standards Collaborative ([ggillis@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:ggillis@infoway-inforoute.ca)).

— *Contributed by Andrea Ciemny*

### Standards Development Organizations' (SDO) Harmonization - Launching This Summer

The old saying, “what we love about standards is that there are so many to choose from,” will soon hold less truth.

Harmonization and the resolution of overlaps, gaps and counter-productive standardization efforts are being launched at the Brisbane ISO/TC215 August meetings in Australia.

ISO/TC215, the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) TC251 and HL7 have officially approved the Charter of the Joint Initiative on SDO Global Health Informatics Standardization. The ISO member body ballot closed with both the Charter and Joint Working Group approved in late June and the HL7 Board, HL7 International Affiliates and CEN/TC251 provided similar approvals earlier in the month.

The Charter provides the basis, principles, purpose and governance of the Joint Initiative. Key in this launching has been the solid trust, confidence and commitment of the leaders of the SDOs in engaging to enable more common and timely health informatics standards. The harmonization work will include:

1. A decision process for international standardization needs;
2. Coordinated standards strategies and plans;
3. An integrated work program; and
4. Focused, specific resolution of overlapping or counteracting standards within existing work programs.

A Joint Initiative Council (Chairs and Vice-Chairs /CEO's/ SDO Leaders) will provide the strategic leadership, while a Joint Working Group, hosted by ISO/TC215 and convening at various SDO meetings will provide the discussion, liaison, advisory and communication forum for achieving the Joint Initiative goals.

Early harmonization work is already underway in various SDO venues. A group of dedicated HL7, CEN and ISO experts are addressing the further development of the EHR Communication Reference Model standard (the 13606 standards family) and the Harmonized Data Types for Information Interchange. Additional needs for harmonization in the care information models area (for clinical statements) is being identified and will be addressed at an August workshop in Brisbane.

As several of our national mandate leaders (including Canada Health Infoway) have indicated harmonization is one of the most promising recent initiatives to come from within the standards community and indeed provides the means to achieve the fundamentally desired paradigm of “one business problem-one standard-one test.” We're excited to launch it and get at it.

— *Contributed by Don Newsham, Head of Delegation to the Canadian Advisory Committee to ISO/TC215*

### ISO/TC215 Standards Knowledge Management Tool (SKMT)

At its 2006 Geneva meeting the Executive Council of ISO/TC 215 Health informatics determined that the Standards Knowledge Management Tool (SKMT) will be used to integrate the ISO/TC215 portfolio of published and in-development standards. A web-based tool, SKMT was developed collaboratively with the Université de Sherbrooke with the intent of enhancing coordination and navigation between standards within the context of the health informatics standards development process.

The SKMT is a powerful tool that can enhance the standards development process. ISO/TC 215 participants can use SKMT to identify a particular ISO/TC215 document through a variety of search criteria or views. This enables participants to not only obtain an overview of the documents that apply to a particular domain of health informatics interest, but also to access support from the ISO/TC 215 standards development

program. By allowing access to the glossary and ISO/TC 215 standards as registered in the tool, SKMT specifically promotes the awareness and availability of already-defined terms and concepts, ensuring that international health information standards now in development are coordinated and consistent with those which have been published.

The SKMT's functionality is based upon the Advisory Committee on Health Infrastructure (ACHI) classification framework developed here in Canada and includes the following features that facilitate its use:

- Different search strategies that include searching by category, keyword, term, and text word. Advance searching is also available using Boolean operators.
- Access to documents that allow for cross-referencing standards and terms.
- The glossary can be accessed and managed separately from document registration.

The SKMT glossary database structure is informed by a parallel work item in the Terminologies Working Group. (WG3). The latter is intended to identify, document and harmonize any divergence of terms and definitions across all of ISO/TC 215's standards. The SKMT generic structure enables both future expansion as well as versioning, which will allow compatibility with further development in using electronic databases for standards development management.

Future enhancements to the SKMT will address refinements to document categorization as proposed by ISO/TC 215, strengthening the SKMT's cross-referencing ability to relate documents to clinical use cases. It has also been observed that SKMT can facilitate the harmonization of glossaries between standards development organizations (SDOs). Finally, ISO Central Secretariat in Geneva has been consulted as to the potential use of tools such as SKMT to manage document development, specifically in relation to the ISO “standards as databases” initiative.

For more information on SKMT, please contact Andrew Grant at [andrew.grant@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:andrew.grant@usherbrooke.ca)

— *Contributed by Michelle Chong*

## NeCST moving to the SC Governance Model

The National Electronic Health Claim Standard (NeCST) is the electronic standard for the exchange of claims information between Providers (as represented by Benefit Groups) and adjudicators. NeCST is based on, and consistent with, the HL7 v3.0 Standard Message Development Framework and was developed in partnership with Canada Health Infoway Inc., national provider groups, provincial public payers; private sector claims payers, and the federal government.

### Contact Information

#### Infoway Standards Collaborative

For any information or questions about the Collaborative, including HL7 Canada, Partnership and ISO, please use the following phone numbers:

Toll-free calls: 1-877-595-3417

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Or send an e-mail to any of the following addresses:

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For several years, stakeholders (providers, payers, and service organizations) have focused their attention on the development of this national electronic claims standard. Now that the standard has been developed, they are ready to concentrate on its implementation and reap the rewards that such a standards-based approach brings.

Following the successful launch of the Interim Financial Management Standards Collaborative Working Group (FM SCWG) at the Partnership Conference in Calgary last May, the NeCST standard is transferring into the SC Governance Model. All historical documentation has been passed to *Infoway*, and maintenance or new development items related to NeCST will now be reviewed and approved through the FM SCWG process. The former Financial Management Domain Committee of HL7 Canada, along with the NeCST Implementation Committee, has been formally retired and integrated into the FM SCWG. The FM SCWG is open to all members of the Standards Collaborative.

Meetings will take the form of regular face-to-face working group meetings occurring twice a year as part of the Partnership conference and monthly teleconferences convened in-between and as needed to support the business of the working group. *Infoway* invites and encourages all interested stakeholder organizations to sign up to the *Infoway* FM SCWG Forum to monitor progress, promote their work items and generally get involved.

— *Contributed by Monica Harry* [mharry@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:mharry@infoway-inforoute.ca)

## New head of OHISC announced

The Ontario Health Informatics Standards Council (OHISC) is pleased to announce that Mary Ann Juurlink will be leading the OHISC Secretariat. Ms. Juurlink has extensive knowledge and experience of health informatics and clinical epidemiology. She has occupied roles at the forefront of health informatics standards development in Canada, including:

- Serving a tenure as Director of Standards at Canada Health Infoway, where she participated in the development of a corporate strategy for harmonizing EHR standards across Canada;
- Leading the HL7 development team for the Western Health Information Collaborative (WHIC) Chronic Disease Management (CDM) Data Standards and Messaging project; and
- Contributing to Canada Health Infoway initiatives, such as the development of the conformance framework white paper, the iEHR Standards Project and the Canadian cross project HL7 ballot.

She is also an active participant in HL7 International and is currently the Publication Facilitator for the HL7 International Patient Care Technical Committee.

OHISC extends its thanks to Fraser Ratchford for his leadership of the Council and the Secretariat over the past three years. Under Fraser's guidance OHISC successfully restructured and focused its priorities. OHISC wishes him every success in his future endeavours.

OHISC continues to review and approve well-developed, stable standards products that can assist the Ontario healthcare community in implementing interoperable systems. Recently, OHISC approved the following Tier 1 standards:

- IHE Consistent Time (CT) Profile [as an implementation specification for the NTP protocol]
- HL7 CCOW (Context Management) standard, and an accompanying position statement
- Western Health Information Collaborative's (WHIC) Chronic Disease Management (CDM) Infostructure, and an accompanying position statement

Tier 1 approval informs and educates Ontario stakeholders that OHISC feels the standard is worthy of adoption consideration.

— *Contributed by Yaron Derman*

## CNA takes the lead in *Infoway's* C-HOBIC project

In May 2007, CNA signed an historic contract with Canada Health Infoway to begin the process of including standardized nursing sensitive patient outcome information in electronic health records (EHR) through Canadian Health Outcomes for Better Care and Information (C-HOBIC). *Infoway* has committed \$750,000 towards the project that has a \$2.8 million dollar budget that is being supported by the three participating provinces: Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan.

Richard Alvarez, CEO of Canada Health Infoway, announced the signing of the C-HOBIC contract during his plenary presentation at the e-Health Conference held in Quebec City in May. C-HOBIC is based on the work of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Health Outcomes for Better Information and Care (HOBIC) but has been expanded to include the participation of two other jurisdictions. A partnership has been developed with the provincial health department officials in Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island for the introduction of standardized assessments of health outcomes.

The current state of provincial electronic health records in Canada is one where clinical information from the more than two dozen healthcare professions is not integrated and, therefore, not usable to create a safer and more efficient healthcare system. Electronic patient records that have been

developed, or are currently being created, in the many regions and health service delivery organizations across Canada do not have a standardized approach to clinical data. This means that data cannot be compared and we are prevented from learning more about the contributions of health care to health outcomes.

Dr. Kathryn Hannah and Peggy White were present in Quebec City for announcement of the agreement. Dr. Hannah has been a long-time advocate of nursing involvement in health informatics. She has worked with Nora Hammell, CNA Director of Nursing Policy, Peggy White, and Dr. Dorothy Pringle, Executive Lead - HOBIC, in developing the successful proposal over the last several years. Dr. Hannah has accepted the position of Executive Project Leader. Peggy White has been Project Manager for Health Outcomes for Better Information and Care (HOBIC) in Ontario and has agreed to bring that expertise to the role of National Project Director while continuing to manage the Ontario program.

Nurses know that policy and advocacy work are long-term endeavours. CNA has been advocating for a co-ordinated system to collect, store and retrieve nursing data in Canada because it is essential for health human resource planning and to expand knowledge and research on determinants of quality

nursing care for the last six years. CNA has lobbied the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) and Canada Health Infoway about this national need for nursing care information. Both CIHI and *Infoway* responded that they could take an interest in this issue if the provinces/territories express the need for such information. Thanks to nurses working together, that time has arrived.

For further information contact Nurse Consultant, Sylvia Raphs-Thibodeau: [sthibodeau@cna-aiic.ca](mailto:sthibodeau@cna-aiic.ca)  
— *Contributed by Sylvia Raphs-Thibodeau*

## iEHR Summer Update

A 60-day public review of the iEHR messaging specifications started on January 2 and closed on February 28. Four public review meetings were held during this process followed by two reconciliation calls. In total, we received 92 comments which were dispositioned and the related documentation was modified to reflect feedback. Comments were mainly related to implementation and infostructure issues and not to the actual message specifications. As it stands now, there are no known issues with the message specifications until we take it for a test drive. The pan-Canadian Standards Group (pCSG) did their due diligence and recommended that we move forward to the next step in the process which is a Stable for Use (SFU) recommendation.

On May 22, a recommendation was made to the Standards Advisory Committee (SAC) that the pan-Canadian iEHR Messaging Specifications (V01R01.4) be considered a “Pan-Canadian iEHR Information Standard Stable for Use”. Achieving SFU status would enable support for the early adopter jurisdictions, British Columbia (BC), Quebec (QC) and Saskatchewan (SK).

SAC members requested that we plan another meeting and invite representatives from the BC, SK, and QC projects to speak about their specific implementations. A SFU designation is expected by the SAC shortly.

— *Contributed by Sukhi Burgen*



**Interchange**

*Interchange* is an e-publication of the *Infoway* Standards Collaborative and the Solution Architecture Group. In addition to news about *Infoway*-developed standards, this newsletter also includes updates on HL7 and HL7 Canada, Partnership for Health Information Standards, Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine (DICOM) and ISO/TC 215 which are part of the *Infoway* Standards Collaborative. We welcome submissions on standards and architecture-related topics of general interest to the health informatics standards community.

To comment, submit or suggest a news item or appointment, please email Dennis Giokas at [archinfo@infoway-inforoute.ca](mailto:archinfo@infoway-inforoute.ca)

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