



Interoperability means the ability of health information systems to work together within and across organizational boundaries in order to advance the effective delivery of healthcare for individuals and communities. HIMSS, 2006

Guiding Principles

The equation for healthcare information technology interoperability is straightforward: we must as an industry agree on healthcare data exchange priorities, define a roadmap, establish the standards that will allow us to move forward, and execute upon this plan.

An agreement between HIMSS, HL7, IHE and EHRVA in February 2005 marked a decision to accelerate interoperability by joining forces, where appropriate, to provide the industry with unified solutions for progress. The Interoperability Collaborative will continue to grow in this spirit, dedicated to enabling the exchange of national health information to increase the safety of patients and to reduce the costs of healthcare.

The Interoperability Collaborative coordinates member activities to overcome obstacles in the progression towards global interoperability.

Organizational Roles

The Interoperability Collaborative encompasses healthcare information technology standards (HL7), standards adoption and implementation (IHE), as well as product delivery and tools for interoperability (EHRVA).

HL7: Development of Standards

- Develops the fundamental healthcare information technology standards for messaging and document exchange. These standards are key components of IHE Integration Profiles and associated implementations.
- Ensures international consensus on its standards

IHE: Standards Adoption and Testing

- Identifies critical 'use cases' through its international sponsorship by clinical and operational IT professionals
- Specifies 'integration profiles': standards-based solutions to address these use cases
- Publishes 'technical frameworks': detailed specification of these solutions
- Tests implementations at IHE Connectathons on three continents
- Engages vendors in publishing product integration statements

EHRVA: Advocacy and Tools for Viable Frameworks and Standards

- Offers *EHRVA Interoperability Roadmap*. Version 2.0: 02.06.
- Supports development of standards and integration profiles
- Fosters member awareness and development of interoperable products

HIMSS hosts the EHRVA and is a sponsor of IHE; the organization is a long-standing supporter of standards, industry-wide education and healthcare information technology market development. The Interoperability Collaborative involves, by extension of its members' relationships, a host of clinical and industry-based associations.



Results to Date¹

- *Consensus Statement in Support of Standardization: a Medical Summary*, 02.05
- *Launch of an IHE Patient Care Coordination Domain*, 04.05
- *Cooperation with HL7 to develop a Care Record Summary Implementation Guide*, 03.05
- Support of HL7 standardization and IHE profiling activities to address gaps identified by EHRVA Interoperability Roadmap
- Joint EHRVA, IHE educational workshop focused on the HL7 Clinical Document Architecture (CDA) and the CDA Implementation Guide for Care Record Summaries (CRS), 08.05
- Consensus recommendations on ambulatory EHR system interoperability requirements
- Feedback and input to *EHRVA 2006 Interoperability Roadmap*
- Memorandum of Understanding renewed and expanded between HL7 and IHE
- Participation at IHE Connectathon 01.06 and IHE Showcase 02.06
- Participation in HL7 Technical Committees and ANSI ballots
- Sharing of Hurricane Katrina relief support activities to maximize synergy and effectively respond to requests from authorities
- Support of AHIC and ONC initiatives, in particular through contribution to the success of HITSP, HIPSC, CCHIT and NHIN prototypes

¹ Interoperability Collaborative Summary. Version 1.0: 02.06