



## Standards Harmonization

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# Standards and Harmonization

- A *standard*\* specifies a well defined approach that supports a business process and
  - Has been agreed upon by a group of experts
  - Has been publicly vetted
  - Provides rules, guidelines, or characteristics
  - Helps to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their intended purpose
  - Available in an accessible format
  - Subject to ongoing review and revision process
- Harmonization is required when a proliferation of standards prevents progress rather than enables it

\*This differs from the healthcare industry's traditional definition of "standards of care"

# Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP)

- The HITSP is a group organized to harmonize the standards used to exchange health data in the United States
  - The Panel brings together experts from across the health care IT community – from consumers to doctors, nurses, and hospitals; from those who develop healthcare IT products to those who use them; and from the government agencies who monitor the U.S. health care system to those organizations who are actually writing the standards
  - The Panel's activities are led by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), a not-for-profit organization that has been coordinating the U.S. voluntary standardization system since 1918

# HITSP Board Members

- Accredited Standards Committee X12
- American College of Physicians
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
- Clinical Data Interchange Standards Consortium (CDISC)
- Department of Defense
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- General Electric Co.
- Harvard Medical School
- Health Level Seven
- Healthcare Information & Management Systems Society (HIMSS)
- IEEE
- Mayo Clinic
- MedicAlert Foundation
- National Consumers League
- National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP)
- National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA)
- OASIS Corporation
- Pfizer, Inc.
- Public Health Data Standards Consortium
- SNOMED International

# Laying the Foundation for the NHIN

- The panel members and experts have committed themselves to setting and implementing standards that will ensure the integrity and interoperability of health data
  - In some cases, redundant or duplicative standards will be eliminated
  - In other cases, new standards may be established to span information gaps
  - In all cases, the resulting standards serve the consumer and other healthcare stakeholders by addressing issues such as data accessibility, privacy and security

# Current Landscape:

Disparate vendor systems, applications, and connectivity suites

- Historically, “unique” market needs within the healthcare community were addressed with customized systems, applications and standards
  - More than a dozen standards-setting organizations – from ANSI-accredited bodies to industry consortia and other forums – have developed a plethora of standards to meet the needs of specific sectors within the healthcare IT market
  - However, the disparate messaging systems, data elements and vocabulary now prevent the cross-system exchange of health information

# Early Successes

- U.S. Health IT Standards Community
  - Cooperative partnerships have been and are being developed between and among certain standards developers
- Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel
  - Within three months of its launch, the panel has grown to nearly 150 members, with hundreds of experts and a representative leadership body
  - Within one week of announcement, HITSP use case committee workgroups were formed and began responding to breakthroughs defined by the Community

# Milestones

- During 2006, HITSP will. . .
  - Implement processes for resolving gaps and overlaps in the health IT standards landscape
  - Develop and implement, as appropriate, harmonized standards that support the Community's breakthroughs
  - Promote public awareness of health IT standards harmonization activities and provide an open, balanced and transparent review mechanism
  - Develop a business model that will sustain the HITSP for as long as standards harmonization and coordination is necessary



# Beyond the 2006 Milestones

- Collaborate With All Contractors To:
  - Develop harmonized standards and unambiguous implementation guides which provide precise instructions for data sharing
  - Standardize the interoperability specifications for technology products, while permitting differentiation and competitive advantage in the marketplace
  - Empower patients and care providers with Electronic Health Records (EHR) that facilitate easy access to critical health data that is accurate, private and secure

# Q & A