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Introduction to HL7 Standards

HL7 and its members provide a framework (and related standards) for the exchange, integration, sharing, and retrieval of electronic health information. These standards define how information is packaged and communicated from one party to another, setting the language, structure and data types required for seamless integration between systems. HL7 standards support clinical practice and the management, delivery, and evaluation of health services, and are recognized as the most commonly used in the world.

HL7 standards are grouped into reference categories:

Section 1: Primary Standards - Primary standards are considered the most popular standards integral for system integrations, inter-operability and compliance. Our most frequently used and in-demand standards are in this category.
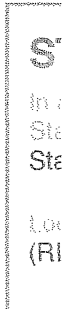
Section 2: Foundational Standards - Foundational standards define the fundamental tools and building blocks used to build the standards, and the technology infrastructure that implementers of HL7 standards must manage.

Section 3: Clinical and Administrative Domains - Messaging and document standards for clinical specialties and groups are found in this section. These standards are usually implemented once primary standards for the organization are in place.

Section 4: EHR Profiles - These standards provide functional models and profiles that enable the constructs for management of electronic health records.

Section 5: Implementation Guides - This section is for implementation guides and/or support documents created to be used in conjunction with an existing standard. All documents in this section serve as supplemental material for a parent standard.

Section 6: Rules and References - Technical specifications, programming

structures and guidelines for software and standards development.

Section 7: Education & Awareness - Find HL7's Draft Standards for Trial Use (DSTUs) and current projects here, as well as helpful resources and tools to further supplement understanding and adoption of HL7 standards.

All HL7 Standards can also be located by other classifications such as ANSI/ISO/HITSP approval and various search variables in our Master Grid.

HL7 encompasses the complete life cycle of a standards specification including the development, adoption, market recognition, utilization, and adherence. Please refer to our IP Policy for more information about how members and non-members can use the standards.

For information on how to use HL7's FHIR Trademarks that are consistent with our common Trademark Policy.

As of 2016 May, the HL7 Governance and Operations Manual (GOM) was updated to reflec Prior to this time the term "Draft Standards for Trial Use" was in effect. You will see both DS listings of Trial Use Standards. Over the course of several years the trial periods on the olde published.

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