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B.C. Health Information Standards Update

August 2019

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome!

This is the second issue of the B.C. Health Information Standards newsletter detailing upcoming standards related projects underway at the Ministry of Health. The inaugural meeting, held on June 5, produced good feedback on the direction of the vendor forum and the Doctors of B.C. and the Ministry of Health teams both support continued collaboration and engagement for all participants. The discussion focused on current Health Information Standards projects including ongoing work with clinical terminology value sets like the Health Concerns &

Diagnosis, Adverse Reactions and Medications, as well as details around additional Data Standards (Date/Time, Demographics, and Patient Identifier). Work on these initiatives will help provide consistency and standardization of data exchange between disparate systems and lead to greater interoperability within Health Information Exchange. Participants are encouraged to forward any comments, suggestions and questions they may have to the teams for follow up.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

By subscribing to our newsletter, you can get e-mail notifications whenever a new issue is published to our website! To subscribe, visit the Newsletters page on the B.C. Health Information standards website, and enter your e-mail in the box on the right-hand side of the page.

Health Registries
Here you can find information on the provider registry (PLR) and the client registry (EMPI) – the authoritative registries of the B.C. healthcare system.

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SNOMED CT
The global language of healthcare

B.C. Health Concerns and Diagnosis Value Set
The B.C. Health Concerns and Diagnosis Value set is a subset of SNOMED CT developed to provide users with a listing of concepts that are relevant to recording health concerns and diagnoses. Learn more about it below.

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HEALTH REGISTRIES

What are the registries and what do they do?

The registries are the central repositories operated by the Ministry of Health for both client and health care provider demographic information. They consist of the Provider & Location Registry (PLR) which stores healthcare provider information data, and the Enterprise Master Patient Index (EMPI a.k.a. Client Registry) which stores patient demographic information data.

What is their role in the health system?

Their role is to facilitate the capture and transfer of important patient demographic and provider information between healthcare institutions. Without these central registries, all institutions would constantly have out-of-date information which would need to be manually updated and maintained in each individual EMR or CIS system. The central registries alleviate this strain by automatically updating and maintaining its own central database, which EMRs and CIS systems can then pull the needed information reducing a significant amount of local costs and resources

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF THE REGISTRIES?

Provider and Location Registry

The PLR acts as a central repository of provider location and information data in British Columbia and facilitates the formal exchange of information between participating organizations. Health care provider licensing bodies in B.C. provide their registrant data to the PLR which is then in turn shared with connected partners. Information sharing is supported through multiple channels – web services via HL7-V3 for real time interactions, manual database extracts exported to CSV or XML files, and a user interface within a stand-alone web application. The mandatory core data elements include: provider identifier (college or MSP practitioner identifier), identifier type, provider name, gender, date of birth, license status, and contact address.

Authorized users with an integrated point-of-service (POS) application can:

- maintain internal providers directories within the health sector
- support activities between health care providers
- search for provider demographic and professional information
- store provider demographic and professional information in the local application
- receive real-time distributions of updated provider information to store in the local directories
- update provider work location information in the PLR

To connect to the PLR, vendors must meet all the requirements defined within the British Columbia Professional and Software Conformance Standards. They must demonstrate the load process that are sent from PLR and captured into local EMR provider directories and must sign the Vendor Participation Agreement. The Ministry of Health is willing to provide assistance during the onboarding process and PHSA is willing to help facilitate.

Client Registry

The client registry is the central repository that stores that stores a Personal Health Number (PHN) for every person that receives health care services in B.C., as well as the corresponding patient demographics. These include: Personal Health Number (PHN), health authority source system identifiers (e.g. medical record number), name, date of birth, date of death (if applicable), gender, address, and telephone number.

Authorized users with an integrated (POS) application can:

- search for patient identity and demographic information
- store patient identity and demographic information in the local application
- update patient demographic information in the client registry, and
- create PHNs for patients.

To connect to either the PLR or Client Registry (EMPI) systems, vendors can contact Conformance and Integration Services at HLTH.CISSupport@gov.bc.ca.

B.C. Health Concerns and Diagnosis Value Set

Adoption and use of standard terminologies within health IT systems is fundamental to sharing clinical information in a machine-readable format. Systematized NOmenclature MEDicine Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT®) serves as part of this solution.SNOMED CT provides a more flexible, comprehensive, and adaptable clinical terminology that is used in over fifty countries to meet today's broader digital health requirements.

This subset of SNOMED CT® was developed by expert clinicians, in collaboration with the B.C. Ministry of Health, B.C's health authorities, Doctors of B.C. and validated by the Canadian Institute for Health Information to provide users/vendors with a listing of clinical concepts that are relevant to recording health concerns and diagnoses. The subset has over 5,300 concepts with mappings to ICD-9, ICD-10-CA and CedDxs, and can be utilized within an EMR solution to represent clinically relevant information consistently as part of producing electronic health information.

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BENEFITS TO CLINICIANS AND VENDORS

Common Terminology
- A single internationally-maintained clinically-validated terminology minimizes the need to support local code systems that duplicate effort and create incompatible solutions

Enhanced User Interfaces
- SNOMED CT® provides navigation hierarchies, and effective techniques to constrain searches

Enhanced Analytics
- SNOMED CT® concept definitions enable flexible and powerful querying of clinical information

Integration of Third Party Products
- Use of SNOMED CT® enables systems to use common services that add functionality to an EHR system

Adapting to Meet Requirements
- SNOMED CT® enables configuration to meet various requirements

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SNOMED CT

SNOMED CT® E-Learning Server; http://snomed.org/elearning.

SNOMED International; SNOMED CT® Technical Implementation Guide; 2017; https://confluence.ihtsdotools.org/display/DOCTIG.

SNOMED International; SNOMED CT® Editorial Guide; 2017; https://confluence.ihtsdotools.org/display/DOCEG.

SNOMED International; SNOMED CT® Vendor Introduction; 2017; https://confluence.ihtsdotools.org/display/DOCVENDOR/Vendor+Introduction+to+SNOMED+CT.

For more information, contact the Health Information Standards team at HLTH.CISSupport@gov.bc.ca

Additional Resources

Here are some resources for more information. Please don't hesitate to contact the Conformance & Integration Services team at HLTH.CISSupport@gov.bc.ca if you have any questions.

Health Information Standards Catalogue
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/health-information-standards/standards-catalogue

Information on Integrating with Ministry of Health Systems
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/software