



Position Statement for Canadian Healthcare Solution Providers The Time for Change is Now!

Overview

As the Canadian healthcare sector joins the global effort to standardize the healthcare supply chain, solution providers supporting the sector must prepare to integrate the GS1 System of global standards within their respective solutions and services.

The GS1 Canada Carenet Healthcare Sector Board therefore recommends that healthcare solution providers join as members of GS1 Canada and become engaged in the Carenet committees dedicated to the process of building the healthcare supply chain standards of the future. In so doing, you will ensure that your organization is represented in discussions about the timeframes and structure for implementation of the standards across Canada's healthcare supply chain.

Statement of Direction

In order to ensure that Canada's healthcare supply chain partners are prepared to operate in an e-supply chain environment and integrate global standards into their business processes, there are a number of areas for supply chain standardization related to the ordering and handling of healthcare products that require consideration:

- The adoption of Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs)
- The adoption of Global Location Numbers (GLNs)
- The adoption of the Electronic Product Code™ (EPC) for RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) solutions
- The integration of database requirements for handling and reporting the global standards
- The implementation of the most current healthcare Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) standards
- The integration of variable data contained in bar codes and RFID tags (E.g. lot number and expiry dates)
- The adoption of industry-approved product attribute fields

Who Is Affected By These Future Supply Chain Standards?

All healthcare stakeholders are affected by the global shift to supply chain standardization, including providers, manufacturers, distributors, Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs), network gateways and software providers. In order to fully implement global standards – to enable electronic transactions between supply chain partners as well as the unique identification of products and locations to enable traceability through the healthcare supply chain – all stakeholder systems must be able to send, receive and report the standardized information.

What Should Solution Providers Be Investigating?

Determine whether your systems accommodate the standards and set an internal strategy to ensure your systems evolve with the development of industry adopted supply chain standards. For example, your systems require the ability to:

- Store, send, receive and report the GTIN, which has a maximum size of 14 digits
- Store, send, receive and report the GLN
- Integrate the EPC
- Capture and communicate variable data contained in automatic identifiers, such as bar codes and RFID tags (e.g. expiry date, lot/batch numbers, serial numbers, etc.)
- Generate and receive the latest EDI transactions that are being designed for Canadian healthcare, and provide the processing requirements for any of the new supply chain standards within these transactions
- Integrate industry-adopted product attribute fields

How Can Solution Providers Remain Informed of Changing Healthcare Standards?

Some of the steps strongly recommended are:

- Become a member of GS1 Canada
- Join the Carenet Healthcare Standards Council and working groups
- Get involved and provide input to the future standards

About Carenet

Caretet is GS1 Canada's healthcare sector strategy to standardize the healthcare supply chain. Through the Carenet strategy, GS1 Canada represents over 470 Canadian healthcare suppliers and 95 suppliers to advance and facilitate the use of electronic commerce in healthcare to enhance patient safety and efficiency.

About GS1 Canada

GS1 Canada is a member of GS1, the world's leading supply chain standards organization. As a neutral, not-for-profit organization, GS1 Canada enables its more than 10,000 members – trading partners of all sizes from 23 sectors across Canada – to enhance their efficiency and cost effectiveness by adopting electronic supply chain best practices. Learn more at www.gs1ca.org.

Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project

The Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project is a national initiative spearheaded by GS1 Canada to standardize the Canadian healthcare supply chain to enable efficiency, interoperability and patient safety.

Phase 1 of the Project has been extremely successful in developing a foundation for integrated healthcare supply chain standards across Canada. Through Carenet, GS1 Canada's healthcare sector strategy, many healthcare trading partners, solution providers and provinces have engaged in the Project to create an interoperable framework that will ensure a pan-Canadian system integration of e-supply chain standards.

Partners are recognizing the advantages of moving forward on system-wide e-supply chain adoption, namely improved product traceability, improved patient safety, operational efficiency gains, significant financial savings, better health human resource management, and anticounterfeiting and theft control.

Phase 2 of the Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project will focus on industry-wide implementation of the standards confirmed in Phase 1. For more information, visit www.carenet.ca.

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