



Canada's Transition to the use of Global Location Numbers (GLNs) via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)

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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian and U.S. healthcare industries are currently transitioning to the use of the Global Location Number (GLN) for location identification, which began with the sunrise date of December 31, 2010.

The GLN is a 13-digit, globally unique GS1 identification number that can identify any location in the supply chain and is used in the electronic exchange of business documents via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

GLNs can identify numerous locations across the healthcare supply chain, including:

- Legal entities, such as manufacturers or hospitals;
- Functions within legal entities, such as pharmacies, hospital wards or purchasing departments; and
- Physical locations, such as a hospital pharmacy, nursing station, or manufacturer's warehouse.

As GLNs are being adopted in the Canadian healthcare sector, there will be a period during which both proprietary codes and GLNs are used in day-to-day electronic business transactions. This is a result of stakeholders being at different levels of adoption as the transition to the GLN takes place, which will require changes to both vendor and provider internal processes and software systems.

This document will provide guidance to the healthcare sector to help ensure that the transition period to mass GLN adoption is seamless and does not disrupt daily operations.

1.1 GLNs versus Proprietary Location Codes

Previously, vendors provided non-standardized proprietary location identification codes to identify various locations for each provider partner (e.g. loading dock, stores area, accounts payable office, etc.). These codes are stored in the provider's Materials Management (M/M) systems and are used, for example, to send Purchase Orders (POs) via EDI. Proprietary location identification codes are assigned and maintained by vendors.

Use of non-standardized location information – that is, proprietary codes – in the healthcare supply chain results in costly errors, wasteful inefficiencies, and has implications for patient safety. To prevent potential inaccuracies, implementing a common business language across the Canadian healthcare sector for location identification using the GLN will provide healthcare trading partners with reliable, consistent information by identifying locations using a single, globally-unique number.

1.2 GLN Assignment

GLNs are assigned by GS1 Canada for Canadian vendor and provider organization locations. The attributes of each GLN (e.g. street address, city/town, province, postal code) will be stored in a location identification database, which will be administered by GS1 Canada. For detailed information on the location attributes, such as field length and field type, please refer to Appendix A on page 7.



Organizations are responsible for maintaining their own GLN information to ensure that it is complete, accurate and up-to-date.

NOTE:

For global manufacturers trading in Canada that have already assigned their own GLNs, GS1 Canada will register these GLNs in a location identification database.

2 ISSUES TO CONSIDER DURING TRANSITION PERIOD

2.1 Providers

Providers (such as hospitals, long-term care centres, and medical clinics) begin the EDI process by generating a PO. Transactions are typically sent through a network gateway, or Value-Added Network (VAN). Transactions are then forwarded to the vendor (i.e. manufacturer or distributor).

Issue to Consider: Vendors must be prepared to accept both GLNs and proprietary codes from their provider trading partners as the providers will be at different stages of upgrading their software.

2.2 Vendors

Vendors respond to providers who have issued a PO by returning PO acknowledgements, invoices, advance ship notices and other EDI transaction types. As with providers, vendors will be implementing the necessary means to process GLNs in different stages, meaning that some may be further ahead in the adoption of GLNs than others.

Issue to Consider: Providers need to know the capabilities of all their vendor trading partners to determine if a GLN or proprietary code should be sent.

2.3 Technical Description of the Changes Required for EDI Transactions

2.3.1 Before GLN Adoption

Example:

Prior to the use of GLNs, Ship To codes were sent in a name/address segment of a PO sent via EDI:

N1^ST^HOSPITAL ABC LOADING DOCK^91^1234567

ST is the qualifier that defines the segment (N1) as a Ship To address

91 is the qualifier defining the following code (1234567) as a Ship To code provided by the vendor

2.3.2 After GLN Adoption

Example:

Upon the adoption of GLNs, Ship To codes will also be sent in a name/address segment of a PO sent via EDI:



N1^ST^HOSPITAL ABC LOADING DOCK^UL^1234567890123

ST is the qualifier that defines the segment (N1) as a Ship To address

UL is the qualifier that defines the following code (1234567890123) as GLN (i.e. Ship To location) that is supplied by the provider

2.3.3 Use During the Transition Process

While the GLN is being adopted by industry, provider M/M systems must be updated to store the 13-character GLN and send the **UL** (GLN) qualifier.

During the transition period, vendors should be prepared to accept name/address segments in POs sent via EDI containing one of the following conditions:

- Proprietary ship-to code, with a **91** qualifier
- The new GLN, with a **UL** qualifier

NOTE:

The end goal is for all providers to have the ability to send the GLN with a **UL** qualifier. As the transition for all providers to send GLNs with **UL** qualifiers occurs, vendors should be aware that they will also be receiving the proprietary codes with a **91** qualifier.

Some providers may be able to use the 13-character GLN as the Ship To code, but still require a software upgrade to implement the use of the GLN qualifier. For this reason, vendors should also be prepared to accept GLNs with a **91** qualifier.

3 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

3.1 Providers

Providers should implement GLNs in a phased approach, beginning with Ship To and Bill To locations. Prior to sending GLNs, providers must perform the following tasks:

- Ensure M/M systems accommodate GLNs.
- Contact vendor trading partners and verify that they are able to accept and process GLNs.
- Communicate to vendor trading partners the provider GLNs for Ship To and Bill To locations.
- Confirm a start date to begin sending GLNs to vendor trading partners.
- Reach consensus with vendor trading partners on all Ship To and Bill To locations.



3.2 Vendors

Vendors are responsible for implementing GLNs for the daily transmission of EDI documents. Initially, GLNs should be created for the vendor's corporate location, all pertinent Ship From locations (e.g. regional warehouses), and the Remit To location for invoices. Prior to accepting and processing GLNs, vendors must perform the following tasks:

- Ensure order entry systems accommodate GLNs (both received from and returned to providers)
- Communicate to provider trading partners the vendor GLN for corporate entity, Ship From and Remit To locations.
- Communicate a start date to begin accepting and processing GLNs to provider trading partners

4 QUESTIONS

To acquire a GLN, contact GS1 Canada at 1.800.567.7084 ext. 3. For additional information on the adoption of GLNs in the Canadian healthcare sector, visit www.gs1ca.org/e/hcsunrise.

Appendix A

Attribute	Field Type	Field Length	Field Attribute Definition	Business Usage Notes
Company GLN	Numeric	13	The unique location identifier for the organization - the legal entity.	The Global Location Number (GLN) is a GS1 key. The GLN can be used to identify physical locations and legal entities where there is a need to retrieve pre-defined information to improve the efficiency of communication with the supply chain. Only numbers are permitted.
Company Legal Name	Alphanumeric	80	Company's legal registered name.	Matches the Government Registered Company Name.
Alternate Company Name	Alphanumeric	80	Alternate company name. (i.e. doing business as, or also known as name (AKA)).	Only one alternate per company is allowed.
Location GLN	Numeric	13	The unique identifier for the location.	The Global Location Number (GLN) is a GS1 key. The GLN can be used to identify physical locations and legal entities where there is a need to retrieve pre-defined information to improve the efficiency of communication with the supply chain.
Location Name	Alphanumeric	80	The name assigned to the specific location.	Must be unique within a given address.
Address 1	Alphanumeric	80	Street or postal address line 1. Includes the number of the location, street name and any suffix (Crescent, Drive, Road, etc.).	Includes: Street Number, Street Name, Street Type (i.e. Street, Road, Court, etc.), and/or PO BOX number.
Address 2	Alphanumeric	80	Street address line 2 . Identifies the floor or wing name of the location.	
Address 3	Alphanumeric	80	Street address line 3. Additional identification, such as a specific room or facility.	When Address 2 is used, add Address 3. When Address 2 is not used, the additional identification described in Address 3 moves to Address 2.
Address 4	Alphanumeric	80	Street address line 4 - Any additional reference area to the location - shelf, aisle or direction	When Address 3 is used, add Address 4. When Address 3 is not used, the additional identification described in Address 4 moves to Address 3.

Attribute	Field Type	Field Length	Field Attribute Definition	Business Usage Notes
City	Alpha	35	City name related to the location	Only one city is allowed.
Province/ Territory / State [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Province, territory or state in which the city is located.	Code List: ISO codes for provinces (based on Country selection) www.iso.org/iso/country_codes/background_on_iso_3166/iso_3166-2.htm
Postal / Zip code	Alphanumeric	20	Postal or zip code assigned to the specific location.	Free-form text and unformatted field. E.g. Canadian Postal Code will only be 7 characters, including a space: M3B 3L1.
Country Name [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Country	Code List: ISO 3166-2 codes for countries URL: www.iso.org/iso/country_codes/background_on_iso_3166/iso_3166-2.htm
Language Code [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Language in which the location information was entered.	Code List: ISO 639-1 codes for languages http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ISO_639-1_codes
Location Function [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Business function(s) for each location.	Code List: Bill To, Order From, Ship To, Ship From, Remit To, Legal Entity Repeatable attribute
Location Type [code list]	Alpha	Code List	The type of facility or location.	Code List: Head Office, Warehouse, Hospital, Clinic, Pharmacy, Mental Health, Community Health, Call Centre, Long Term Care, Emergency Medical Service (EMS), Correctional Facility, Nurse Station, Dock Door, Emergency Department, Operating Theatre (Additional codes to be added as required.)

Attribute	Field Type	Field Length	Field Attribute Definition	Business Usage Notes
GLN Status [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Indicates the status of the GLN.	Code List: A=Active, I=Inactive An Active GLN is in use within the supply chain. An Inactive location is one that is no longer in use (i.e. location is closed, location has moved, location has been sold, a new GLN has been assigned, etc.).
Parent Location (GLN)	Numeric	13	Identifies the GLN parent of the location.	One level up parent
Date Last Updated	Date	Date/Time	Date and time when the location record was last updated.	System generated value YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM:SS (with 24 hour clock)
Last Updated By [user]	Alphanumeric	User ID	User identification of individual who last updated the location record.	System generated value
Contact Name	Alphanumeric	70	Title, Department Name or Person for this location.	If a contact name is entered, both the Contact Method and Contact Method Value are required.
Contact Method [code list]	Alpha	Code List	Method of contact.	Code List: Email, Fax, Instant Messenger, Mobile Phone, Pager, Phone, SMS, Website. When this field is populated, the Contact Method Value must also be populated.
Contact Method Value	Alphanumeric	70	Value of the contact method used.	Actual value; for example, phone number, email address, etc. When this field is populated, the Contact Method must also be populated.



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