



## **Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE)** *Changing the Way Healthcare Connects*

IHE, or Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise, is a global non-profit entity that enables care providers and industry work together to improve **interoperability and exchange of health information** through a proven framework for standards-based interoperability for healthcare IT systems—available in the public domain—that is being adopted and implemented worldwide.

Over 250 member organizations contribute nearly 300 individual volunteers to participate in IHE committees. These individuals from across the globe include hospitals, clinicians, ambulatory practices, medical societies, academic medicine, researchers, and vendors.

IHE solves real-world healthcare IT interoperability challenges through the work of clinical and operational domains representing participants worldwide:

Anatomic Pathology	Laboratory	Radiology
Cardiology	Patient Care Coordination	Radiation Oncology
Eye Care	Patient Care Devices	Quality, Research and Public Health
IT Infrastructure	Pharmacy	

**Research and Development** – Working together in a collaborative process, clinicians, healthcare IT software developers and end-users identify and evaluate use cases that enable the interoperability, security and quality of healthcare IT systems. Next, they identify, select and optimize established standards from organizations such as ISO, HL7, IEEE, DICOM and many others. These standards are evaluated for maturity, robustness, testability and suitability to address the intended use case(s). This work is documented in the form of implementation specifications called IHE Profiles.

To date IHE has produced over 100 profiles which are, in turn, used by healthcare organizations, government entities and vendors around the world to design, test, acquire and implement interoperable, standards-based systems.

**Testing** – IHE Profiles are tested at events called Connectathons, conducted annually by IHE regional and national deployment affiliates including IHE Australia, IHE China, IHE Europe, IHE Japan and IHE USA. IHE USA is a national deployment affiliate of IHE International, and a primary partner, with IHE Canada, in the annual IHE North America Connectathon.

The success of the Connectathon process is demonstrated by its continued growth. At the 2010 North American Connectathon, 498 system engineers representing 104 participating vendors, agencies and organizations, tested over 150 health IT systems making the 2010 North American Connectathon the largest healthcare interoperability testing event in the world.

**Demonstrations – HIMSS Interoperability Showcases™** – IHE Profiles that pass IHE Connectathon testing may be demonstrated at Interoperability Showcase™ events sponsored by HIMSS at conferences across the globe. Showcases are interactive activities that provide a clinically-accurate hands-on demonstration of complex healthcare scenarios in which different organizations and agencies incorporate interoperability into their products.

**IHE Sponsors and Partnerships** –IHE has successfully grown based on a fully-cooperative partnership model. It takes many people, organizations and activities to understand and manage the complexities of standards development and standards harmonization. IHE has partnerships with over 250 organizations around the world, including, but not limited to:

- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- American College of Physicians (ACP)
- COACH: Canada's Health Informatics Association
- College of American Pathologists - SNOMED Terminology Solutions
- European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP)
- European Society of Radiology (ESR)
- Health Level 7, Inc. (HL7)
- Health Information Management Association of Australia
- Japanese Association of Healthcare Information Systems Industry (JAHIS)
- Société Française de Radiologie (French Society of Radiology)
- Turkish Association of Medical Diagnosis and Therapy Technologies (TipGörDer)
- National Quality Forum (NQF)
- Servicio de Salud de Castilla - SESCAM
- State of Oregon Department of Human Services

**Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) and IHE** – National and regional health information exchange projects in the United States include HITSP implementation specifications which incorporate IHE Profiles. Currently, the HITSP specifications have selected or referenced over 50 IHE Integration Profiles and Technical Frameworks components. Plus, as of January 2008, any new or upgraded U.S. federal health information system must be compliant with recognized HITSP interoperability standards. For further information please visit [www.hitsp.org](http://www.hitsp.org).

Get involved! IHE is successful because of the hard work of its members. Get involved and help continue to grow the success of IHE.

To learn more about IHE, visit [www.ihe.net](http://www.ihe.net) or contact [ihe@ihe.net](mailto:ihe@ihe.net)

To learn more about HIMSS Interoperability Showcases™, visit [www.interoperabilityshowcase.org](http://www.interoperabilityshowcase.org) or contact [interoperabilityshowcase@himss.org](mailto:interoperabilityshowcase@himss.org)