



## Introduction to IHE® - Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise

### What is Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise?

Founded in 1997 by HIMSS and RSNA, IHE is a global non-profit entity that enables the collaboration of healthcare providers and industry leaders to work together to improve *interoperability and exchange of health information*. IHE utilizes a proven framework for standards-based interoperability of healthcare IT systems which is being adopted and implemented worldwide.

IHE is based on a fully cooperative partnership model with over 350 member organizations that contribute over 2,000 individual volunteers to participate in IHE committees. IHE volunteers have a diverse background including clinicians, ambulatory practices, hospitals, medical societies, academic medicine, researchers, and vendors from across the globe.

The work of IHE is divided into two primary categories of work: Development and Deployment.

### IHE Development Domains

IHE International oversees the work of development committees in 11 clinical and operational domains.

1. Anatomic Pathology
2. Cardiology
3. Eye Care
4. IT Infrastructure
5. Laboratory
6. Patient Care Coordination
7. Patient Care Devices
8. Pharmacy
9. Quality, Research and Public Health
10. Radiation Oncology
11. Radiology

Each of the eleven international development domains is organized into two committees, Technical and Planning. The Planning Committee annually selects the use cases and the Technical Committee profiles the use of standards to address each use case, documenting them in Technical Framework documents and their supplements. The IHE Domain Coordination Committee ensures that consistent processes and technical directions are maintained by all development domains. After a public review process, testing and trial implementation, the IHE Technical Framework is published in the public domain.

### IHE Integration and Content Profiles: A Framework for Interoperability

The IHE Profiles created by the development domains provide a standards-based framework for sharing information within care sites and across networks by addressing critical interoperability issues related to information access for care providers and patients, clinical workflow, security, administration and information infrastructure. Each IHE profile defines the actors, transactions and information content required to address the clinical use case by referencing appropriate standards.

IHE Profiles are compiled into IHE Technical Frameworks—detailed technical documents that serve as implementation guides and are freely available at [www.ihe.net/technical\\_framework](http://www.ihe.net/technical_framework).

## **IHE Deployment Committees**

IHE Deployment Committees are based in a given country or group of countries to promote the appropriate use within their respective geographic areas of the specifications defined in the IHE Technical Frameworks. IHE National and Regional Deployment Committees include:

**IHE Europe:** Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Norway, Spain

**IHE Asia-Oceania:** Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, United Kingdom

**IHE North America:** Canada, U.S.A.

The IHE Deployment Committees support the work created in the IHE Development Domains by undertaking a range of important activities including education, and sponsoring testing events called "Connectathons." IHE developed the Connectathon process in 1999 to provide an independent, monitored, vendor-neutral setting to execute coordination and provide tools and opportunities for face-to-face interoperability testing for vendors of health IT systems implementing IHE integration capabilities.

IHE Connectathons also support the needs of local and regional initiatives worldwide. Emerging standards and other capabilities are tested along with IHE Profiles at each regional Connectathon. For example, at the IHE North American Connectathon, and CORE/CAQH specifications are also tested. In Europe, standards related to the European Union epSOS initiative are tested. IHE Connectathons are held annually in locations worldwide including Asia, Australia, China, Europe, Korea and North America. IHE maintains a database of results accessible at <http://connectathon-results.ihe-europe.net> or [Click Here](#).

## **2010 IHE Connectathons in Europe and North America Set Participation Records**

The success of the IHE Connectathon process is demonstrated by its continued growth and level of support and participation by stakeholders from across the globe. The 2010 North American Connectathon was the largest ever with 498 system engineers representing 104 participating vendors, agencies and organizations. These organizations tested over 150 health IT systems making the 2010 North American Connectathon the largest such healthcare interoperability testing event in the world. The 2010 European Connectathon celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> year of activity drawing vendors from across the globe and was the largest such testing event ever held in Europe.

## **Demonstrations: HIMSS Interoperability Showcases™**

IHE Profiles that include public comment review and pass Connectathon testing may be demonstrated at HIMSS Interoperability Showcase™ events at conferences across the globe. Interoperability Showcases are large scale interactive activities that provide demonstration of complex healthcare scenarios showing how different organizations and agencies can exchange information by incorporating interoperability into their systems.

## **Product Registry and User Handbooks: Advice for Purchasers and Implementers**

The IHE Product Registry provides essential information for IT administrators and executives responsible for purchasing and integrating health IT systems. Detailed testing results from IHE Connectathons in Europe, North America and Asia are available in this easy-to-use online database. Results are cross-linked to IHE Integration Statements which are conformance commitments of the IHE capabilities of commercial products from vendors worldwide. This information is available at [www.ihe.net/registry](http://www.ihe.net/registry).

### ***Interested to Learn More About IHE?***

Please visit our website at [www.ihe.net](http://www.ihe.net)

If you are interested to receive our monthly newsletter or have questions,

please contact us at [secretary@ihe.net](mailto:secretary@ihe.net)