HL7 International and SNOMED International Strengthen Collaboration to Advance Global Health Data Interoperability

Organizations plan joint education, validation and implementation initiatives to help healthcare systems exchange information with consistent clinical meaning



LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, November 11, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- HL7® International and SNOMED International are advancing joint technical and education initiatives as they work toward renewing their formal collaboration agreement. The efforts aim to strengthen global health data interoperability by helping healthcare organizations exchange clinical information while preserving its meaning across systems and borders.

HL7 International is a not-for-profit, ANSI-accredited standards development organization that develops standards for structuring and exchanging health information, including HL7 FHIR® (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources). SNOMED International is the not-for-profit organization responsible for SNOMED CT, the clinical terminology that gives health records a shared language and is used in more than 80 countries.

> “HL7 FHIR and SNOMED CT are complementary building blocks for making health information more consistent, meaningful, and usable across systems and borders.”” *Professor Rachel Dunscombe*

Together, HL7 standards and SNOMED CT support semantic interoperability, enabling healthcare systems to exchange information that can be consistently interpreted and used. HL7 standards provide the structure and mechanisms for exchanging data, while SNOMED CT

provides standardized clinical terminology to represent its meaning.

The organizations have collaborated formally and informally since 2009 to develop and support complementary standards that govern the meaning and exchange of clinical data and related health information. Key achievements of this partnership include the development and expansion of the International Patient Summary (IPS), which supports consistent exchange of essential patient information across borders, as well as the creation of the SNOMED on FHIR working group to establish best practices for implementation.

Building on this foundation, HL7 International and SNOMED International are pursuing joint work that reflects the growing, increasingly urgent need to foster global health interoperability for implementers and patients worldwide. The organizations are exploring expanded collaboration in three areas: joint education and awareness initiatives, integrated technical validation through FHIR Connectathons, and implementation resources that help organizations use both standards effectively.

An initial initiative is the development of a joint course, FHIR + SNOMED CT: Working Together for Semantic Interoperability. Designed for clinicians, health information professionals, policymakers and implementers, the course will explore how FHIR and SNOMED CT work together to support accurate, meaningful clinical data exchange. Currently in an early design phase, the course is expected to offer flexible learning modules ranging from one to four hours, with potential in-person, virtual and self-paced delivery options to meet the needs of audiences at every stage of digital health maturity.

“True interoperability requires more than the ability to exchange data. It requires a shared understanding of what that data means,” said Professor Rachel Dunscombe, CEO of HL7 International. “HL7 FHIR and SNOMED CT are complementary building blocks for making health information more consistent, meaningful, and usable across systems and borders. By strengthening our collaboration with SNOMED International, we can help implementers put these standards to work together, build the skills needed to support adoption, and ultimately improve how information supports patient care.”

According to SNOMED International CEO Don Sweete, the renewed partnership builds on a strong foundation to achieve the goals of the collaboration. "Our collaboration with HL7 International has shown what's possible when two standards organizations work toward a shared goal,” he says. “Through our long-tenured collaboration, we've built the foundation that lets SNOMED CT and FHIR work as one, so clinical meaning can travel reliably across systems and borders. That work, tested hands-on at HL7 FHIR Connectathons, has led directly to the International Patient Summary Free Set, which makes SNOMED CT openly available for a use case that matters to patients everywhere."

About HL7 International
Health Level Seven® (HL7®) International is a not-for-profit, ANSI-accredited standards

development organization dedicated to advancing global health data interoperability. HL7 develops standards, including HL7 FHIR®, that enable healthcare information to be exchanged, integrated, shared, and retrieved across systems. Learn more at www.hl7.org.

About SNOMED International
SNOMED International is the not-for-profit organization that owns and develops SNOMED CT – the world's most comprehensive health terminology product. We improve the health of humankind by enabling healthcare information to be exchanged globally for the benefit of all. We are committed to continuous innovation.

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