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A NEW DIRECTION FOR HEALTHCARE

Update: ePathology Program
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National standardisation of technical approaches

- The objective of NEHTA's ePathology Program is to standardise the technical approaches to enable and improve e-health solutions
- To achieve this we need:
 - Timely reporting and intelligent notification / alert processes
 - Unique Identification of patients, providers and organisations
 - Standardisation on the structure and presentation of results
 - Standardisation on pathology terminology sets
 - Facilitation of e-requesting with digital signatures
 - Evidenced based intelligent pathology ordering based on diagnosis
 - Incorporation of point of care and self-testing results in patient record
 - Streamlined consumer access to results
 - Reconciled requests with results



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Recognition of current experience and knowledge

- We recognise that:
 - Electronic messaging of pathology results is generally normal practice
 - Standards Australia publish messaging standards using the Health Level 7 (HL7) messaging format
 - These standards have been implemented (to some degree) by almost all of the pathology agencies in Australia
 - The National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) through publication of the Requirements for Information Communication (2007) provide guidelines for use for the standards published by Standards Australia specifically AS4700.2-2004, which promotes best practice for message creation
- There are opportunities for improvement



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ePathology Program deliverables so far

- As part of our mandate NEHTA has developed the Pathology Result Reporting Package v1.0:
 - Delivered to industry a draft package prototype in September 2008
 - Focused on the variability in message structure, content and delivery
 - Sought stakeholder feedback on the package structure and process as well as the content for Pathology Result Reporting
- Your feedback has told us:
 - Stakeholders want to be involved
 - Collaboration and input is expected at the development stage
 - Tighter integration is needed with Standards Australia, HL7 and industry
 - Leverage of experience and previous work is necessary
- Feedback reports are available on the NEHTA website




Our response to your feedback

- Refined our objectives
- Refocused the structure of the e-Pathology package
- Redefined our strategic approach



Strategic approach to best practice implementation

- Our intended approach will:
 - Leverage previous experiences, existing work, assets and prior investments (where appropriate) in the sector
 - Recommend specifications that add value and that are implementable in stages using complementary and incremental building blocks
 - Facilitate compatible system support to enable more efficient transition to the new e-health state
 - Assist the community to enhance e-health interoperability beyond the current HL7 v2.x messaging paradigm using national infrastructure components
 - Make available usage guidance and commentary on existing standards, within the broader national framework for e-health interoperability in pathology



Steps to make this happen

- Identify interoperability gaps and address these through the development of additional specifications in collaboration with the pathology community
- Seek national agreement on the specifications proposed for pathology
- Work with relevant stakeholders to determine requirements for national adoption and implementation
- Assist the pathology industry in implementation activities in a managed migration over time
- Encourage the industry to look beyond current business processes and toward greater interoperability especially through the use of language or logic and presentation.

Other considerations

- The industry requires:
 - A strong business case
 - Successful knowledge transfer
 - Workforce development
 - Financial support from the government and payers
 - Technical assistance
- E-health standards are key:
 - But these need to be more specific
 - Contain fewer implementation options
 - Be developed collaboratively with the people that will use them
 - Be 'tried and tested' in real world environment
 - Information to understand the rationale behind content and application
 - Be supported by clear and realistic expectations for adoption

We are seeking your assistance

- Immediate contribution is sought to:
 - Update the Environment Scan for Pathology Result Reporting
 - Develop Environment Scans for Requesting, E-Notification and Synoptic Reporting
 - Re-work and add to the solution package for Pathology Result Reporting
- Future contribution is sought to:
 - Develop the solution package for:
 - Pathology Requesting
 - E-Notification Reporting
 - Synoptic Reporting

How to contribute

- NEHTA will initially identify a wide stakeholder group listing including representation from peak pathology bodies, standards bodies, software industry and clinicians
- Clearly documented acceptability criteria will be developed collaboratively
- Pieces of work will be offered to stakeholders with clear understanding of the purpose and scope and estimated development time
- Stakeholders with available time and interest can request to become a contributor to the work
- Once formed, the focus team will work closely with NEHTA to complete the necessary body of work
- An online collaborative portal will be made available for the contributors to communicate with NEHTA staff and each other
- The material will then be offered for review to the wider stakeholder group
- Final integration with the relevant standards body's processes (where appropriate)



Thank you

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