



Position Statement for Canadian Healthcare Prepare for Global Supply Chain Standards Adoption

Overview

Canada's healthcare environment is undergoing radical change, and the healthcare supply chain is no exception. In an effort to enhance patient safety and cost efficiencies, the Canadian healthcare community is collaborating on the standardization of the Canadian healthcare supply chain, aligning changes with developments that are taking place at the global level. This alignment with Canada's global suppliers and partners is strategically important, considering that the vast majority of healthcare products arrive in Canada from multiple countries.

Statement of Direction

In order to ensure that Canada's healthcare supply chain partners are prepared to operate in an e-supply chain environment and integrate global standards into their business processes, there are a number of areas for supply chain standardization related to the ordering and handling of healthcare products that require immediate attention:

- Adoption of the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) as the product identification code in Healthcare
- The database requirements for handling the GTIN
- Barcode and barcode scanner requirements

Canada's position on these three items is entirely consistent with the global activity being led by the global GS1 Healthcare Leadership, which is comprised of multinational healthcare manufacturers, as well as leading hospital and group purchasing organizations. The global position statements can be found in the GS1 global website at <http://www.gs1.org/healthcare/about/position>

Automatic Identification Standards in Healthcare – Global Trade Item Number (GTIN)

To ensure that no product or packing size will be confused with another, the GS1 Canada Carenet Healthcare Sector Board strongly recommends that all healthcare stakeholders adopt the GS1 GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) as the common product identification code.

The GTIN identification number can be carried on any type of data carrier, a bar code (linear or 2-dimensional) or a radio frequency identification tag, on the specific product or packaging. Each number is unique to the product and its respective packaging hierarchy.

For further information related to the registration of GTINs and the benefits of global standardization, please refer to the link in the "Statement of Direction" section above.

Database Requirements for Handling the Global Product Code – Allow for 14 digits

The GS1 Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) can have different data structures as per GS1 Standards: GTIN-8, 12, 13 or 14 – all are legitimate forms of identification in Healthcare. To safeguard the integrity of the GTIN numbering system for all Healthcare stakeholders, databases need to be able to capture these different data structures. This means that stakeholder databases need to be constructed in such a way that they accept 14-digit GTINs.

It should be noted that all systems and databases (whether those of the provider, manufacturer, distributor or network gateway) should be able to send, receive and report up to a maximum of 14-digit GTINs. Also noteworthy is that GTINs must not be altered at any point in the supply chain, as this compromises their uniqueness.

For further information related to the processing of GTINs in Healthcare and the benefits of global standardization, please refer to the link in the “Statement of Direction” section above.

Bar Code and Bar Code Scanner Requirements – Prepare for the advent of 2-D bar codes

Because of the increased capabilities of camera-based bar code scanners, GS1 Canada and GS1 Global Healthcare strongly recommend investing in such scanners when introducing bar code scanners or when replacing existing linear bar code scanners. This will facilitate adoption of global standards for automatic identification in the healthcare supply chain.

Unlike the grocery and retail environments, healthcare requires additional information on the bar code, such as expiry date, batch/lot number, and serial number. This additional information may not always be achieved through a traditional linear bar code, therefore 2-Dimensional bar codes will continue to increase in prevalence across the Healthcare sector. Camera-based bar code scanners are required to read GS1 2-Dimensional symbologies, though they also read linear bar codes. Linear bar code scanners cannot read 2-Dimensional bar codes.

For further information related to the recommendations related to bar code scanners, please refer to the link in the “Statement of Direction” section above.

About Carenet

Caret is Canada’s healthcare sector strategy to standardize the healthcare supply chain. Representing over 460 Canadian healthcare suppliers and 95 suppliers, Carenet advances and facilitates the use of electronic commerce in healthcare to enhance patient safety and efficiency.

About GS1 Canada

GS1 Canada is a neutral, not-for-profit organization that promotes and maintains global standards for the identification of goods, locations and related e-commerce communication, and provides education and awareness of these global standards. Learn more at www.gs1ca.org.



Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project

The Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project is a national initiative spearheaded by Carenet, GS1 Canada's healthcare sector strategy, to standardize the Canadian healthcare supply chain to enable efficiency, interoperability and patient safety.

Phase 1 of the Project has been extremely successful in developing a foundation for integrated healthcare supply chain standards across Canada. Through the Carenet strategy, many healthcare trading partners, solution providers and provinces have engaged in the Project to create an interoperable framework that will ensure a pan-Canadian system integration

of e-supply chain standards. Partners are recognizing the advantages of moving forward on system-wide e-supply chain adoption, namely improved product traceability, improved patient safety, operational efficiency gains, significant financial savings, better health human resource management, and anti-counterfeiting and theft control.

Phase 2 of the Canadian Healthcare Supply Chain Standards Project will focus on industry-wide implementation of the standards confirmed in Phase 1. For more information, visit www.carenet.ca.

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