



For Immediate Release

Safer, More Efficient Care Starts with a Simple Scan

Canada's Largest Market Pushes for Global Standards in Healthcare

May 23, 2017 – TORONTO. On May 16, an expert panel for the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released its recommendations through the Ontario Health Sector Supply Chain Strategy: Advancing Healthcare in Ontario, Optimizing the Healthcare Supply Chain – A New Model.

Among the recommendations to the Ontario Ministry of Health is a strong endorsement for the application of “an internationally recognized bar coding standard that provides full traceability of products, including pharmaceuticals, to the patient.”

The report foresees that with “adoption of global standards in healthcare for product traceability, Ontario will significantly advance patient care, quality and safety.” Such a finding follows the lead of the healthcare sector in other countries and Canadian provinces identified in the report, which are implementing the GS1 standards to address the same objectives.

Being most commonly recognized for the barcode, which is used over six billion times every day across a wide range of applications and sectors, GS1 commends the panel for recommending the implementation of “an internationally recognized bar coding standard” in Ontario. GS1 is the world’s leading user-driven supply chain standards organisation, responsible for developing global standards. As the local member organisation, GS1 Canada assists organizations across the country with standards implementation.

Through the traceability provided by the implementation of GS1 global standards, the objective stated in the report can be achieved, and products can be tracked from manufacturers, to procurement then through to individual patients and their electronic medical records. This common, universal language of data is the foundation for a safer, more efficient healthcare system that saves time, money and – most importantly – helps caregivers to protect patients.

“Implementing global standards throughout the Ontario healthcare sector will deliver the significant improvements in patient safety and cost efficiencies already seen in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States,” says John King, former Assistant Deputy Minister for the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and former Senior Vice President of Operations at St. Michael’s Hospital.

“Healthcare providers work hard to deliver the safest possible care to all of their patients and to do this they need the right products on hand every time,” says Marianne Timmons, President Industry Engagement, GS1 Global Office. “We know that the implementation of GS1 global standards can be an added help for healthcare providers to ensure surety of supply and allow the product to be related to the patient, increasing patient safety.”

As experts in the execution of global standards in industry sectors such as Pharmacy and Foodservice, GS1 Canada can help healthcare groups across the country understand the implications of the reports’ recommendations and learn how to implement global standards within their organisations. Visit www.gs1ca.org/healthcare for more information.

About GS1 Canada: GS1 Canada is a member of GS1, the world's leading supply chain standards organization. As a neutral, not-for-profit organization, GS1 Canada enables its subscribers, organizations of all sizes from more than 20 sectors across Canada, to enhance their efficiency and cost effectiveness by adopting electronic supply chain best practices. For more information, please visit www.gs1ca.org.

About GS1: GS1 is a neutral, not-for-profit organisation that develops and maintains the most widely used global standards for efficient business communication. We are best known for the barcode, named by the BBC as one of “the 50 things that made the world economy”. GS1 standards improve the efficiency, safety and visibility of supply chains across physical and digital channels in 25 sectors. Our scale and reach – local Member Organisations in 112 countries, 1.5 million user companies and 6 billion transactions every day – help ensure that GS1 standards create a common language that supports systems and processes across the globe. Find out more at www.gs1.org

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