

SDO Charter – Version 1.14 Final

1. Mission

The mission of SDO Charter Organization (SCO) is to provide an environment that **facilitates effective coordination and collaboration** on U.S. national healthcare informatics standards development, with recognition of the international and multi-industry stakeholder implications and challenges. Its purposes include:

1.1 To facilitate the coordination of conventions for enhanced interoperability among diverse standards development organizations in the areas of health data acquisition, processing, and handling systems.

1.2 To communicate and coordinate when appropriate with the U.S. Technical Advisory Group (US TAG) in order to facilitate a unified representation of US standards (this is not intended to supersede any member's existing coordination with the US TAG).

NOTE: As detailed in the section [Background](#), the rationale for the SCO is to provide an executive forum and process for senior leadership of the U.S. healthcare standards development community to have strategic and tactical dialogue, planning and action on the varied activities of their respective managers, staff and volunteers – given all the varied stakeholder demand, efforts and initiatives (i.e. HITSP, CCHIT, ONC, etc).

2. Objective

Based on business needs, our intent is to adopt an approach that results in increased efficiency and effectiveness of the Standards Development Community. This will occur through:

2.1 Facilitate the creation of a common information model to coordinate the semantics of the data to be exchanged

2.2 Defining a common method for expressing stakeholder commitments

2.3 Leveraging existing terminology and data types work

2.4 Using a common approach consistent with ANSI-accredited procedures in standards development to achieve interoperability across the healthcare user community

2.5 Recognizing the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and an effective outreach to subject-matter experts

Meeting these objectives will be done in order to provide healthcare technology implementers and users the ability to share information accurately.

3. Goals

Facilitate and help support resolution of industry standards challenges for efficient and effective information management, and electronic data exchange, in the following key focus areas:

3.1 Coordination among standards development organizations (e.g., models, collaboration, and vocabularies) through common strategies

3.1.1 Improve the consistency across standards to reduce the challenges for implementers

3.2 Optimize financial and human resources.

3.3 Increase usability and quality of standards and their ability to support meaningful improvement in healthcare outcomes (e.g., patient safety, data, reduce costs).

3.4 Ensure the availability for standards to support workflow and operations through enhanced interoperability for both the current and desired state.

4. Guiding Principles

In their work together, the participating members of the SCO will:

- 4.1 Use ANSI best practices for standards development such as following the ANSI *Essential Requirements* document.
- 4.2 Be business requirements driven with a project-based approach engaging stakeholders.
- 4.3 Agree on expectations regarding commonality of strategy and process, using appropriate quality and risk management techniques.
- 4.4 The organizations agree to maintain a national perspective in satisfying the business needs of the healthcare industry while fostering greater consistency, collaboration and interoperability that would support international standards initiatives.
- 4.5 Improve coordination on work programs using collective and individual SDO resources that seek to minimize overlap of standards and work efforts.
- 4.6 Provide coordinated communications to shared external stakeholders and communities of interest.
- 4.7 Allow for public comment process of participating organizations.
- 4.8 The SCO member organizations agree to establish and maintain a methodology or process that ensures timely reviews of SCO activities and allows for adequate SCO member input.
- 4.9 Cooperate and communicate. The organizations agree to cooperate and communicate with one another and to respect existing MOUs.

5. Membership

5.1 Classes of Membership

5.1.1 Standards Development Organizations (SDOs)

The membership shall consist of executive leader representative of standards development organizations (primary and alternates).

5.1.2 Standards Development Organizations-related entities

The membership shall consist of executive leader representative (primary and alternates) of other invited organizations with direct or indirect involvement with SDOs (i.e., WEDI, HITSP, CA-BIG, Regenstrief, etc). SDO-related entities include government, corporate, and other business entities active and/or interested in the field of health informatics, including health data acquisition, handling (including communications interchange), and processing.

5.1.3 Official Observer

The membership shall consist of executive leader representative (primary and alternates) of standards development organizations or other invited organizations with direct or indirect involvement with SDOs who wish to be members, without voting rights. Official Observer entities include government, corporate, and other business entities active and/or interested in the field of health informatics, including health data acquisition, handling (including communications interchange), and processing.

ANSI is a permanent member, with non-voting rights.

5.2 Establishment of Membership

Membership will be available to organizations invited by the Chair as initiated by a voting member. Membership requests can also be submitted to the Secretariat, and would include the following (but not limited to): name of the organization, brief background of the organization, description of interest, requested membership category, primary and alternate representative(s).

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Membership shall become effective when an application has been accepted by a vote of SCO members in attendance.

The initial signatories to the Charter will establish the initial SCO membership.

5.3 Voting Rights of Membership

5.3.1 Primary Representative

The Primary Representative is the official representative of a member organization, as shown by a letter of support from the executive management of the organization. The primary representative has voting rights.

5.3.2 Alternate Representative

The Alternate Representative is one or more designees of a primary representative organization, as shown by a letter of support from the executive management of the organization. Alternate representatives shall not have voting rights, except in the absence of the primary representative.

Note: Formal Observer Members do not have voting rights, but must designate a primary and alternate representative.

5.4 Requirements for Membership

5.4.1 Attendance

Attendance by a primary or alternate representative(s) at the scheduled meetings shall be required to maintain membership. Excused absence procedures shall be defined. Failure to participate may be the basis for forfeiture of membership.

5.4.2 Requesting A Membership Class Change

A member's Membership Class may be modified by making a formal request to the Secretariat at least 10 business days prior to the next official SCO meeting.

Membership class modification will be approved by two-thirds of the voting members present at the meeting.

5.5 Appeal/Reinstatement

The SCO will maintain an appeal/reinstatement process.

5.6 Rights of Membership

5.6.1 Primary Representatives

The rights of primary representatives shall include the right to attend all SCO meetings, the right to vote (except Official Observer) on all issues that come before the SCO, the right to submit proposals for consideration by the SCO, the right to request establishment of ad hoc committees to evaluate proposals. Additionally, primary representatives shall be included in the SCO membership roster and distribution lists (electronic and otherwise), and shall be sent all materials directed to the membership.

5.6.2 Alternate Representatives

Alternate representatives shall have all the privileges of the primary representative except the right to vote. The right to vote shall, however, be extended to an alternative representative in the absence of the primary representative (except Official Observer). As many as five formal alternates can be identified per member organizations.

5.7 Resignation

A Member may resign at any time by submitting a letter of resignation to the Chair.

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5.8 Quorum

Quorum shall consist of greater than 50 percent of voting members and must include the Chair or Chair Elect, to conduct official business.

6. Leadership and Management

6.1 Leadership

The leadership consists of a Chair and a Chair Elect. See added detail in [Roles of the Parties Involved](#)

6.2 Election of Chair/Chair Elect

The Chair and Chair Elect must be a member of the SCO and shall not be from the same organization. The Chair and Chair Elect are elected from the full membership by a vote. The Chair Elect assumes the duties of the Chair when the Chair is unable to perform the duties. The Chair Elect is part of the voting membership.

6.3 Term of Chair/Chair Elect

The term of the Chair is 2 years. The term of the Chair Elect is 2 years, after which the Chair Elect moves into the Chair role, and a Chair Elect is elected by the full membership by a vote.

6.4 Secretariat

Secretariat duties include meeting planning, development of agendas, minutes, project management, membership management, document management, etc. The Secretariat role may rotate or be split amongst organizations, or the SCO may use an existing organization that has these functions already established.

6.5 Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be formed by the SCO for a limited time, to deal with specific items of the SCO. Upon completion of the project, the ad hoc committee will be dissolved.

6.6 Management

Robert's Rules of Order will be used for meeting management protocol. The Chair will have the right to initiate creation of policies and procedures, if and as needed to document SCO operation and management. Approval of this document would require a 2/3 approval vote, and a minimum of 30 days for review prior to the vote.

7. Voting

7.1 Election of Chair and Chair Elect

The Chair and Chair Elect are elected from the full membership using 2/3 percentage of those voting.

7.2 Voting on Modification of Charter

Approval of an amendment requires an affirmative vote by a majority of eligible members.

7.3 Voting on SCO Actions

Approval requires an affirmative vote by a majority of eligible members.

8. Roles of the Parties Involved

8.1 Collaborative SCO Endeavors

From time to time, two or more SCO members will undertake joint work efforts to accomplish tasks or projects that contribute to SCO objectives. Such tasks or projects will be clearly defined and delineated by a joint project proposal, which must include a succinct description of the proposed project and an estimate of time required and

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resources expected to be committed by each of the participating parties. Joint project proposals shall be discussed by the SCO prior to project commencement. The SCO will determine which joint project proposals will be executed in their activities. In addition, such proposals will define a communication plan where regular communication status is provided on joint work efforts and problems/issues and pertinent activities are conveyed. The goal of this communication is to expeditiously address impacts to projects and avoid duplication of effort.

8.2 Ownership and Respect of Copyright and Intellectual Property

Each party expressly agrees to the following:

9.2.1 To respect the copyright and intellectual property of each other's organization.

9.2.2 That no ownership rights to the Standard or Trademarks are transferred or assigned.

8.3 Documentation of the SCO

The SCO may create documentation; however the SCO does not develop standards related implementation guides. Standards and/or guides are developed at the SDO(s).

9. Miscellaneous

9.1 Duration

This Agreement shall have a two-year term, renewable upon extension by written agreement for subsequent two-year terms.

9.2 Charter Modification

Amendment of the Charter may be done only by a vote of the SCO and may be accomplished by:

9.2.1 Any member of the SCO has the right to propose amendments (changes, additions, deletions) to the Charter.

9.2.2 Publication of a proposed amendment to the SCO at least 30 days prior to the date of a SCO meeting, and

9.2.3 A vote by the SCO.

9.3 Logo Usage

This will be determined by the project proposal, the participating parties, such as not to be in conflict with any existing MOUs affecting participating parties.

9.4 Guests and Observers

9.4.1 Invited guests by the SCO are allowed to participate in work activities and attend meetings of the SCO and have no voting rights.

9.4.2 At face-to-face meetings of the SCO, interested stakeholders and members of SCO organizations may make a request to be part of the gallery to observe the work of the SCO. Space will be on a first-come, first serve basis, as determined by the space constraints of the meeting facilities. The request should be made to the SCO Secretariat.

Authorized Signatures:

Name of Organization 1

Name of Organization 2

Name:

Name:

Sign: _____

Sign: _____

Date:

Date:

Appendix

12. Definitions

12.1. Standards development organizations (SDOs)

- Entities whose processes are accredited by ANSI and which create standards in health informatics and implementation of electronic health record systems;
- SDOs or other organizations responsible for the standards chosen by Health Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) initiative;
- SDOs or other organizations put forth by the respondents to the November 2004 Health and Human Services RFI on the development and adoption of a NHIN;
- SDOs under the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-Standards Association (IEEE-SA) with a focus on healthcare and health informatics; and
- Other SDOs nominated by expert cross-agency sources in the Federal government.

12.2. SDO-related entities

Other invited organization with direct or indirect involvement with SDOs (i.e., WEDI, HITSP, CA-BIG, Regenstrief, etc). SDO-related entities include government, corporate, and other business entities active and/or interested in the field of health informatics, including health data acquisition, handling (including communications interchange), and processing.

13. Background

Many different organizations develop standards for various aspects of electronic health information exchange. The use of existing standards to accomplish any significant health data interchange between independent entities increasingly involves implementation of multiple standards developed by different organizations. Some efforts (e.g., claim attachments, authorization of electronic prescriptions, and the HITSP use cases) require the use of standards from multiple bodies simultaneously, posing yet additional challenges to automating the healthcare data flow.

The different standards development organizations working in the health information space have developed their individual standards in response to different stakeholder groups and needs, with the result that standards developed by different organizations are built on different views of the world (either implicit or in an explicit information form/model); use various data types, data elements, syntaxes, and vocabularies; are explained using different styles of documentation; and, in some cases, have overlapping scopes.

These differences in standards that must be used throughout the healthcare community in similar manners substantially increase the already significant challenge of implementing interoperable health information systems. They also increase the level of effort required by the (largely volunteer) standards development workforce. As a result, interoperable health information standards take longer to develop, test, and implement. This slows the adoption of standards and delays the development and deployment of interoperable health information systems that can improve patient safety, improve cost-effectiveness of healthcare operations, and facilitate research, public health surveillance and intervention.

Standards development organizations (SDOs) have long recognized the problems created by lack of consistency in their products, but significant previous efforts to create a broad solution (e.g., ANSI HISB and its predecessor, ANSI HISPP) failed from a lack of commitment and funding in both the public and private sectors. More narrowly focused initiatives (e-prescribing pilots) have been more successful due to the commitment and resources made available. Today, most SDOs working with health information have multiple collaborations with other SDOs to improve interoperability, including those identified by AHIC for the Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP). Unfortunately these collaborations further

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increase demand for the relatively limited amount of resources available for standards activities.

14. Administration of the SCO Meetings

The SCO will convene at least semiannually at a location chosen by the Chair. SCO members, invited guests and observers attend at their own expense. Meeting notices shall be provided to interested parties.

14.1 Meeting Designations

Portions of each national committee meeting may be designated as "open" or "executive session" at the discretion of the Chair with the approval of a majority of the SCO members.

14.2 Open Meetings

An open meeting will be held at least once per year. In an open meeting, all interested parties are welcome to attend and observe the proceedings. Only voting members and their alternates, however, may participate in the formal deliberations. Interested parties who wish to attend as an observer should communicate their planned attendance to the SCO Secretariat prior to the meeting. This will enable adequate planning for seating and allow advance mailing of agenda material to all guests. Seating for the SCO primary and at least two alternates will be provided at the head table and/or appropriate seating to best enable a consensus-based, effective collaborative work environment. Additional seating will be provided for observers, invited guests, added alternates in an audience section.

14.3 Executive Sessions

As necessary, executive sessions may be held when agenda items center on SCO operation, membership, or policies, or as otherwise determined by the Chair or by affirmative vote of the majority of the members. Executive sessions include SCO primary and alternate members and at the discretion of the Chair, associated staff of SCO members. Portions of executive sessions can also include invited guests as well as their associated staff.

14.4 Conference Calls

Conference calls will be scheduled at the discretion of the SCO Chair. Only SCO members will be invited to participate. However, at the discretion of the Chair the participation of others may be allowed. The conference call agenda will be prepared by the SCO Secretariat and sent to each member prior to the scheduled conference call. Minutes will be taken by the Secretariat and distributed to all SCO members after the conference call.