



# Health IT Standards Committee

A Public Advisory Body on Health Information Technology to the National Coordinator for Health IT

August 30, 2013

Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM  
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Mostashari,

The HIT Standards Committee's (HITSC) Nationwide Health Information Network (NwHIN) Power Team prepared recommendations in response to the question of whether ONC should consider enhancing the current portfolio of transport standards to support the use of RESTful services in health information exchanges for Stage 3 meaningful-use (and beyond). As inputs into this task, the ONC asked the Power Team to review the Blue Button Plus (BB+) initiative, the RESTful Health Exchange (RHEX) project, and HL7 work to develop a new standard called Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR). The Power Team was also asked to coordinate its recommendations with the Privacy and Security Workgroup and the Consumer Technology Workgroup. Final conclusions and recommendations were presented to the HITSC on August 23, 2013 and accepted for transmittal to the National Coordinator. The NwHIN Power Team's presentation, with minor changes reflecting HITSC comments, is contained in the Appendix.

## **Overarching Conclusion:**

The NwHIN Power Team discovered that several technology standards were used in the BB+ initiative and the RHEX project, and concluded that:

Secured RESTful transport (HTTPS), OpenID Foundation's OpenID Connect, Internet Engineering Task Force's OAuth2, Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise's (IHE) Internet User Authorization (IUA) and HL7's FHIR comprise a reasonable and appropriate set of standards to use as building blocks for more complicated healthcare applications.

## **The HITSC Recommends:**

- ONC support the development and piloting of these standards (HTTPS, OpenID Connect, OAuth2, IHE IUA, and FHIR) as candidate building blocks for healthcare applications
  - BB+ "Pull" holds potential as a national implementation specification for future meaningful-use Editions, but further development and piloting are needed

- RHEX Project is a useful demonstration of how these standards can be used together to support robust, but simple healthcare exchange
- Use of the IHE IUA profile in environments that require coexistence with existing profiles based on IHE constrained user-context assertions
  
- ONC ask the Privacy and Security Policy Tiger Team to address the questions of 1) whether “trusted registration” with a Registry Service should be required for BB+ “Pull” applications, and 2) if so, what should “trusted” entail
  - BB+ concept of implementing a Registry Service to recognize two types of registration – “trusted” and “open” – assumes policy that has not been established and implies a level of app “trustworthiness” that may not be justified

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Jonathan Perlin

Chair, Health IT Standards Committee

/s/

John Halamka

Vice Chair, Health IT Standards Committee

Appendix:

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