July 16, 2012

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) Vocabulary Task Force developed recommendations for the use of vocabulary standards by measure developers. The recommendations were presented to the HITSC on June 20, 2012 and accepted for transmittal to the National Coordinator.

Recommendations

- Developers of eMeasures should rely on existing medical record documentation and coding in the standards instead of requiring new or different documentation and coding, except where a policy process determines a need to use measures as a deliberate forcing function to induce new behaviors.
- Developers of eMeasures should first use existing standard vocabulary concepts, the use of which has been demonstrated in certified electronic health record systems.
- NLM as part of the Value Set Authority Center should provide to eMeasure developers data from cooperating EHR systems on the frequency of use of vocabulary concepts, in convenience subsets of standard vocabularies, or reference sets, for specific purposes such as primary care.
- NLM should support and promote consulting assistance from terminology experts so that eMeasure developers may better use resources provided by the Value Set Authority Center.

Sincerely yours,

/s/   /s/
Jonathan Perlin   John Halamka
Chair, Health IT Standards Committee   Vice Chair, Health IT Standards Committee