

## Health Information Compliance Alert

### **Data Standards HIMSS TESTIMONY SPEAKS OF STANDARDS TO INTEGRATE HEALTHCARE DATA**

Software companies that create products to maximize the efficiency of the flow of health information within healthcare organizations are focusing efforts on specific standards, according to government panel testimony.

Software companies that create products to maximize the efficiency of the flow of health information within healthcare organizations are focusing efforts on specific standards, according to testimony delivered before a government panel Nov. 25.

Experts from the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society testified Nov. 25 before the Institute of Medicine's committee on patient safety data standards concerning a survey conducted by HIMSS. The survey consisted of reports from about 20 vendors, consultants and suppliers and was conducted in early November. Ninety-one percent of software companies use data standards set by Health Level 7, a message standard that permits data systems from various vendors to exchange data without human intervention, according to HIMSS.

Eighty-two percent of those surveyed said they use standards from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD), while 73 percent noted that their products conform to Current Procedural Terminology standards (CPT).

David Roberts, director of public policy for HIMSS, said 71 percent of the survey participants believed data standards would significantly improve pharmacy or medication management, while lab, general practices and the emergency department would also be benefit.

Over half of the respondents said the HIMSS' "Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise" initiative would be the most effective means of improving integration efforts among applications, while others mentioned The Leapfrog Group, the National Alliance for Health Information Technology and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations as other initiatives that have a significant role in pushing for the adoption of standards.