



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**MedicAlert Foundation International and CAP STS Collaborate to Standardize  
Emergency Medical Information**  
*Health Care IT Advancement: Interoperable Data and Its Role in Saving Lives*

**Turlock, CA and Northfield, IL** – In an effort to advance health information interoperability, MedicAlert® Foundation International and SNOMED Terminology Solutions™ (STS) are working together to standardize the health information in the MedicAlert Emergency Medical Information Record (EMIR), making it easier for consumers to connect their emergency medical information to other health information applications currently available on the Microsoft® HealthVault™ Platform.

Health information interoperability and electronic health records (EHRs) adoption are key components of U.S. healthcare reform initiatives, included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), to move toward a nationwide interoperable health information technology (HIT) system.

The MedicAlert® EMIR that will serve as the emergency information component of an EHR, is a secure, central repository of medical information and provides critical information in combination with MedicAlert's 24-hour emergency response service.

SNOMED Clinical Terms® (SNOMED CT®)—a globally recognized controlled medical vocabulary—will serve as the standard healthcare terminology within the system's backbone. Terminology including conditions, allergies, immunizations, and medical devices will be mapped to SNOMED CT. MedicAlert EMIR's use of standards will allow information to flow from it to other EHRs that use similar standards, thus achieving interoperability between systems.

"As we expand our presence on the Microsoft® HealthVault™ platform, it was imperative for the MedicAlert Foundation to adopt standards such as SNOMED CT to ensure and enhance interoperability," said Martin Kabat, president and CEO, MedicAlert Foundation. "To deliver safe care, medical professionals need to know about a patient's medical conditions, allergies, and medications. Our mission is to save lives by making essential medical information available whenever it is needed. Our collaboration with CAP STS advances our mission."

ARRA incentives advocate standards-based solutions that enable the meaningful use of HIT, although the federal definition of "meaningful use" has not been finalized. In August, the HIT Standards Committee, the federal advisory panel on HIT standards, endorsed recommendations on how providers may electronically record a physician's observations to qualify for federal

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bonuses. The recommendations include ICD-9 or SNOMED CT in 2011, or ICD-10 or SNOMED CT in 2013, and SNOMED CT in 2015.

“We do know that safe and effective exchange of health information is important for patients and health care providers,” Kabat said. “Access to standards-based solutions that enable the safe exchange is a necessity.”

STS is a division of the College of American Pathologists (CAP), the original creator of SNOMED CT. CAP, with a 40-year history of terminology development and through its STS division, focuses on consulting, education, and other services related to SNOMED CT and other terminologies and classifications where SNOMED is often used collaboratively.

“MedicAlert Foundation’s commitment to enhance the interoperability of its life-saving service demonstrates leadership in the use of how health care information technology and standards can directly benefit patients,” said Kevin Donnelly, CAP STS vice president and general manager. “Our collaboration is a perfect match, as both organizations have a long history of providing products and services focused on improving and saving lives of citizens around the world.”

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### **About MedicAlert Foundation International**

MedicAlert Foundation International pioneered the first medical identification service in 1956 as a way to provide people with a simple but effective method for communicating their medical conditions. Since the organization’s founding, MedicAlert has provided services and products that protect and save the lives of its 4 million members. For more than 50 years, the organization has relayed vital medical information on behalf of its members to emergency responders so they receive faster and safer treatment. As a result, MedicAlert Foundation has now developed an Emergency Medical Information Record (EMIR) service as its core offering. MedicAlert emblems, worn as bracelets, pendants, watches, or other forms of jewelry, alert emergency personnel to a member’s EMIR. In addition to its 24-hour emergency response service, MedicAlert also provides family notification in the case of an emergency and so that members can be reunited with their families. For more information visit [www.medicalert.org](http://www.medicalert.org) or call 1-800-ID ALERT (1-800-432-5378).

### **About SNOMED Terminology Solutions and the College of American Pathologists**

SNOMED Terminology Solutions™ (STS), a division of the College of American Pathologists (CAP), is the leading organization in pursuing semantic interoperability for electronic health records by offering customized best-practice terminology implementation and education services. CAP is the original creator of SNOMED Clinical Terms® (SNOMED CT®) and has fostered its development for more than 40 years. CAP STS continues to develop and maintain SNOMED CT on behalf of the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO®). CAP STS works with clients nationally and internationally; these clients include provider organizations, HIT vendors, universities, research centers, and government agencies. The College of American Pathologists (CAP) is a not-for profit medical society serving more than 17,000 physician members and the laboratory community throughout the world. It is the world’s largest association composed exclusively of pathologists and is widely considered the leader in laboratory quality assurance. For more information about SNOMED Terminology Solutions and the College of American Pathologists visit [www.capsts.org](http://www.capsts.org), [www.cap.org](http://www.cap.org) or write to [snomedolutions@cap.org](mailto:snomedolutions@cap.org).

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