

## HSCN Moves to Support GS1 Standards

**TORONTO, ON., May 14, 2010.....**The Healthcare Supply Chain Network (HSCN) announces its support of GS1 standards, specifically the Global Location Number (GLN) to standardize location identification and the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) to standardize product identification.

Both the GLN and GTIN provide the healthcare sector with the ability to standardize the identification of products and locations, enabling traceability and data synchronization through the supply chain.

For years, leaders representing all aspects of the healthcare supply chain have been working in support of a common set of data standards. GS1 Canada member organizations, through their Carenet strategy, are collaborating to drive momentum towards standards adoption and implementation in healthcare.

HSCN will play an active role in promoting education to help those working in the industry to understand and effectively deploy standards-based solutions.

The HSCN Board and its membership are in support of the GS1 Standards movement in healthcare because we understand the impact that data standards will have on improving patient safety and supply chain efficiency. The HSCN Board urges every Canadian healthcare supply chain professional to become educated in the GS1 standards and to ensure these standards are part of their strategic planning processes moving forward.

For more information about GS1 standards visit: [www.gs1ca.org](http://www.gs1ca.org)

### **What are data standards and why are they important in the healthcare supply chain industry?**

Information and data are becoming more easily accessible than ever before. However, the wide range of formats used in today's healthcare industry needs to be assessed and screened for their relevance.

As a result of use of differing standards or formats, there is an issue in healthcare - not all required information is easily accessible. The Efficient Healthcare Consumer Response study (1996) states that \$11 billion is wasted each year in the North American healthcare supply chain - estimates for that number have nearly doubled in the last ten years - largely due to the fact that data standards are either lacking entirely or they are not as widely used or well-developed as in other industries.

To help manage all of this information, standards groups have been formed to reduce healthcare costs by publishing standards and promoting their use throughout the entire healthcare supply chain.

GS1 standards regulate operations between all trading partners in the healthcare supply chain. GS1 standards (GLN, GTIN) are widely adopted around the world, and across all sectors facilitating between 5 to 6 billion transactions daily,

HSCN encourages all healthcare providers and suppliers to learn about t GS1 standards.

## **GLN**

### **What is a Global Location Number (GLN)?**

The GLN is a 13-digit global GS1 Identification Number that is used to identify any location in the supply chain that needs to be uniquely identified. The associated name, address, and building type are all sample data fields “tied” to each unique number. The GLN may be used to identify both physical locations and legal entities.

Examples of GLN locations in healthcare may include:

- A manufacturing location, a distribution centre or hospital
- A warehouse
- A specific dock within a warehouse
- A specific delivery location
- A specific shelf in a store room
- An operating theatre
- A storage cabinet
- A nurse's station

A legal entity may include:

- Manufacturers
- Wholesalers
- GPOs
- Distributors
- Third party logistics
- Healthcare providers
- Hospitals

To access the Healthcare GLN Implementation Guide:

[http://www.gs1.org/docs/gsmf/healthcare/GLN\\_Healthcare\\_Imp\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.gs1.org/docs/gsmf/healthcare/GLN_Healthcare_Imp_Guide.pdf)

### **What is a Healthcare GLN Registry?**

A Healthcare GLN Registry is a central database that keeps track of location information such as the name, address, building type and phone number for each provider. Additionally, it maintains the same information about the suppliers with which an organization transacts. It is online 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The GLN and related GLN registry enable supply chain partners to simply reference a GLN in supply chain communications, as opposed to manually entering all the necessary location information. A number of GS1 organizations, including GS1 Canada, have established such databases to hold detail of locations.

### **What is Global Supply Chain Identification**

Global Supply Chain Identification is the process of assigning one globally unique number to each location that receives products from suppliers. Both customers and suppliers have these numbers assigned. You, as a healthcare provider, will have a number if a supplier is going to deliver products to your specific location. If suppliers only deliver products to your receiving dock, only that location will have a Global Location Number (GLN). Alternatively, if suppliers deliver to more locations, additional numbers are assigned.

## **GTIN**

### **Global Trade Item Number**

The Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) is the globally unique GS1 identification number used to identify trade items, which includes both products and services that are sold, delivered, and invoiced at any point in the supply chain. GTINs are assigned by the brand owner of the product and identify manufacturer's products as they move through the global supply chain to the hospital or ultimate end user.

The rules for assigning GTINs ensure that every variation of an item (eg: each packaging size) is allocated a single reference number that is globally unique. Once assigned, all trading partners and internal users can use and reference the GTIN. It is encountered most frequently at point-of-sale and on cases and pallets of products in a distribution/warehouse environment, but GTINs equally apply in the healthcare supply chain and enable patient safety best practices (eg: bedside scanning). GTINs can be encoded into various types of GS1 bar codes and Electronic Product Codes (EPC) which are programmed into Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags.

The GTIN is a required component of the Global Data Synchronization Network (GDSN) and various types of e-commerce transactions. They are most commonly used on purchase orders and delivery and payment documents.

For more information on GTINs in healthcare:

[http://www.gs1.org/docs/gsmpr/healthcare/GS1\\_Healthcare\\_GTIN\\_Allocation\\_Rules.pdf](http://www.gs1.org/docs/gsmpr/healthcare/GS1_Healthcare_GTIN_Allocation_Rules.pdf)

***Our mission is to establish and promote Canadian healthcare supply chain standards and leading practices, and to provide executional support for all healthcare stakeholders that result in improved effectiveness and efficiency, improved patient outcomes and greater alignment between supply chain partners.***