



## ConCert FAQ's | Last revised December 2017

### What is ConCert by HIMSS™?

ConCert by HIMSS is a comprehensive interoperability testing and certification program governed by HIMSS and built on the work of the EHR | HIE Interoperability Workgroup and IHE USA. ConCert by HIMSS tests and certifies electronic health record (EHR), health information exchange (HIE), and medical device vendors committed to advancing interoperability and enabling secure, reliable transfer of data within and across organizational and state boundaries.

### How was the brand name ConCert by HIMSS™ chosen for this program?

The ConCert by HIMSS team examined various words that represent the goals of the program. The first part of the brand name, CON, represents CONnectivity which is the core of interoperability. The last part of the brand name, CERT, represents CERTification which conveys that a certain product has passed performance tests. The word concert also means "agreement of two or more individuals in a design or plan; combined action; accord or harmony." Together with HIMSS leadership, this new program will certify connectivity to advance interoperability in the marketplace.

### How does ConCert by HIMSS™ work?

This robust, highly automated testing and certification program will verify that, once certified, a product is capable of exchanging health information securely and reliably with other certified products. With this certification, a single set of standardized, easy-to-implement connections can support communication among systems.

### Who is launching ConCert by HIMSS™?

ConCert by HIMSS brings together trusted organizations with credibility in implementing standards for interoperability.

HIMSS is the governing body and a renowned convener with strong public policy channels, stakeholder representation and industry support. ConCert by HIMSS will play a crucial part in HIMSS Interoperability Services that provide virtual and on-site testing, certification and advanced technical support to prepare vendors for the testing and certification process. EHR | HIE Interoperability Workgroup is the 19-state, 47-vendor initiative committed to achieving interoperability using a common set of standards-based specifications. The initiative developed strong technical specifications for exchange and a rigorous test tool for testing interoperability.

IHE USA has built specifications that form the foundation of interoperability and data exchange, plus, carries broad industry expertise and system-to-system testing experience.

Stella Technology, designed, developed and is currently supporting the Interoperability Testing Tool (ITT) used by HIE, EHR and Direct vendors to test and certify their systems' compliance with the ConCert by HIMSS™ specifications. The ITT is a cloud-based, automated and self-service tool that streamlines the entire testing process. It provides comprehensive resources and troubleshooting assistance to vendors to make the certification process experience as seamless as possible.

### **How does ConCert by HIMSS™ align within ONC's vision of Interoperability?**

The program relies on tightly constrained specifications based on national standards including relevant profiles developed for the IHE Technical Framework specifications, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) certification criteria.

The ONC Interoperability Roadmap calls for industry to take critical actions around developing robust testing tools outside of ONC Certification. The robust Interoperability Test Tool (ITT) developed for the program to assure a high level of rigor, and now in use by the ConCert testing and certification program supports that call to action.

The ONC 2015 Edition Health IT Certification Criteria encourages the industry to provide health IT developers with more flexibility and opportunities for certification that support both interoperability and innovation. The ConCert by HIMSS testing and certification program does exactly that.

### **What is the governance model for the ConCert by HIMSS™ program?**

The ConCert by HIMSS Advisory Committee is established through balanced governance and key stakeholder representation. The Advisory Committee provides program oversight, recommendations on future direction and scope, set priorities, determine program policy, and serve as champions for the program. Technical workgroups are also formed within the HIMSS Committee structure to help maintain and update the specifications/schema, and manage the test tools.

### **How will ConCert by HIMSS™ ensure broad stakeholder representation?**

Committee members apply and go through a rigorous selection process to become ConCert by HIMSS Advisory Committee, each for a two-year term, including representation from each of the following stakeholder groups:

- States and/or regional HIEs or networks
- EHR vendors
- HIE vendors
- Healthcare provider organizations and/or Medical groups
- Clinicians
- Medical device vendors
- Consumers

Additional seats are reserved for a representative from each of the program's founding organizations including HIMSS , and NYeC.

### **What are the benefits of the ConCert by HIMSS™ program for healthcare providers?**

ConCert by HIMSS offers a one-of-a-kind, vendor-independent seal of approval for health information systems, designed to help provider organizations objectively evaluate solutions and their true impact on their organization over the short and long-term. A comprehensive program

that streamlines the certification of products, ConCert by HIMSS reduces the need for costly custom interfaces and is backed by trusted names. It is transparent, collaborative and dedicated to innovation and the evolution of interoperable solutions that provide reliable systems integration and functionality. When a solution features the ConCert mark, organizations can be assured that the product is interoperable with other products and will include the ability to store, access and share the health information that an organization and its patients require.

### **What are the benefits for vendors to pursue ConCert by HIMSS™ certification?**

ConCert by HIMSS is a comprehensive certification for solutions that facilitate standards-based secure and reliable data exchange. Designed to simplify and streamline the certification process, the ConCert program saves vendors time and money that can instead be channeled into innovation. Organizations can get an edge on competition with the ConCert mark—the only vendor-independent certification that assures providers that products are interoperable and is backed by trusted industry leaders.

### **What does the ConCert by HIMSS™ certification mark cover?**

To address the differing needs of the many users of health IT, ConCert by HIMSS™ includes three unique programs.

- ConCert by HIMSS EHR™- for EHR systems that enable clinicians to share health information within and across care delivery communities, providing a simplified way for providers to send secure health information directly to trusted recipients, including patients, over the Internet. Supports both Query-based exchange and DIRECT exchange with the addition of the provider directory.
- ConCert by HIMSS HIE™- for health information exchange (HIE) vendor systems that enable clinicians to share health information within and across care delivery communities.
- ConCert by HIMSS HISP™- for health information services provider (HISP) systems with provider directory services that offer a simple way for providers to send secure health information directly to trusted recipients, including patients, over the internet.
- ConCert by HIMSS Medical Device™ - for medical devices and EHR systems to provide a standardized way to exchange programming order information and clinical information at the point of care.

### **How does ConCert by HIMSS™ compare to HealtheWay, CareQuality, and CommonWell?**

ConCert by HIMSS is a testing and certification program that assures secure and reliable data exchange between EHRs, HIEs, and HISPs. The ConCert program tests specifications based on technical transport standards that enable exchange between EHRs and HIEs within a community as well as EHRs and HISPs both within and across communities. ConCert by HIMSS is completely vendor-independent and network neutral.

HealtheWay provides services that enable health information exchange networks to interoperate. This exchange is considered an HIE to HIE model, whereas ConCert by HIMSS enables connectivity within a regional network (EHR to HIE). The ConCert by HIMSS and

HealtheWay programs are highly complementary as many of the underlying standards for Query-based exchange are aligned to ensure a complete, interoperable EHR to EHR environment.

CareQuality is focused on implementing a framework to expand network interoperability beyond the members of the Healthway eHealth Exchange. The effort includes specifications, but does not yet include testing or certification components.

CommonWell is a vendor-led data sharing network that is exclusive to the vendors that are part of that network.

### **How does ConCert by HIMSS™ support emerging standards such as HL7 FHIR®?**

ConCert by HIMSS is supportive of emerging standards that enable the interoperability of health IT solutions. For example, HL7 FHIR® is a next generation scalable standards framework that is web services based. IHE will continue to work with HL7 and other stakeholders to align specifications that leverage evolving standards and services as they mature. Healthcare providers need a dependable and mature set of standards to drive their interoperability capabilities today. The ConCert by HIMSS testing and certification program is positioned for the future, while based on a sound exchange infrastructure that delivers this high level of interoperability now.

### **Where Can I Find the Published Test Approaches, Cases & Scripts?**

The test cases, scripts and procedures are not in the public domain, and as such we require interested parties to contract with HIMSS in order to obtain the testing materials, guidance, and access to the tool. Sample Tests of each certification path are provided upon request by contacting us at [concert@himss.org](mailto:concert@himss.org)

### **How does the ConCert ITT (Interoperability Testing Tool) address ‘happy path’ & negative testing?**

The ITT provides comprehensive coverage when it comes to both “happy path” and negative testing.

IHE specifications include details about the error codes and information that should be returned under specific circumstances. ConCert includes tests that verify the expected error code and that information is returned under the circumstances specified by the specifications.

- Examples of negative tests in ConCert include: PDQ Consumer submits query with unknown scoping org; receives error. Verifies that the PDQ Supplier responds with the correct error code and location to PDQ request with unknown scoping organization.
- PIX Manager (HL7v2) receives A01 PIX. Add with no Patient ID and returns error. Verifies that PIX Manager responds with correct error code to HL7v2 PIX. Add message with no patient ID.
- XDS Registry receives FindDocuments XDS Query with no \$XSDocumentEntryPatientId parameter, returns error. Verifies that XDS Registry responds with correct error code when XDS FindDocuments query is missing the \$XSDocumentEntryPatientId parameter.

In addition to error codes provided by IHE specifications, the ITT goes a step further and tests for conditions not specifically called out by IHE. An example of such test case is testing for transactions with missing required parameters.

Handling and responding to error conditions in a way that can be understood and interpreted by other systems is important to interoperability because it helps systems to identify and fix incompatibilities. ConCert fully recognizes this, and the testing coverage provided in the ITT is a reflection of that fundamental principle.

**Where can I find test results for ConCert Certified Products?** Test results of passing organizations are published on the ConCert website.

**Can I Access the testing tools – the ITT?**

The ConCert certification program is a private sector initiative that uses a proprietary testing tool. This testing tool is available to vendors once they sign up for the program. A contracted vendor has full access to both the test environment and a production environment. Educational webinars can be found on the ConCert website which provides an overview of the program and a demo of the testing tool.

**Where can I find governance or other related policies associated with an organizations keeping/retaining their certifications?**

The ConCert by HIMSS Advisory Committee has been established through balanced governance and key stakeholder representation. The Advisory Committee provides program oversight, recommendations on future direction and scope, set priorities, determine program policy, and serve as champions for the program. Technical workgroups have been formed to help maintain and update the specifications/schema, and manage the test tools.

[Click here for more information on the ConCert Advisory Committee](#)

**What guidance for surveillance does the ConCert Program maintain and ensure that vendors are compliant with their certification at all times?**

The certification is granted to a specific product and version, and developers are not allowed to claim certification to versions other than those that have been tested, certified, or have received approval for inheritance of certification.