Elysa Jones  
Chair  
Emergency Management Technical Committee  
OASIS

June 1, 2010

Dear Elysa,

On behalf of the Emergency Interoperability Consortium (EIC) and the Department of Homeland Security’s Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC), we would like to submit the attached documents for standards review and formalization by the Emergency Management Technical Committee (EM-TC) under the OASIS process. Taken together, they provide the practitioner requirements for an EDXL-Tracking of Emergency Patients (EDXL-TEP) Messaging Standard, which will provide the ability for seamless patient tracking across disparate locations, organizations and systems during mass causality, cross-jurisdiction incidents as well as common, day to day incidents.

The EDXL-TEP Steering Committee, stakeholder groups, and domain vendors in addition to the EDXL Practitioner Steering Group (PSG) and Standards Working Group (SWG) are the source of the requirements for this proposed standard. The EIC supports and strongly endorses their efforts.

The National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) with many other agencies and organizations recognized the need for standards-based interoperability to realize the potential of the numerous patient tracking systems in existence or planned. These organizations introduced TEP to the DHS Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC), which was initiated by the PSG as the next EDXL Priority.

Like its EDXL predecessors, this Requirements and draft Messaging Specification document was developed through DHS-OIC sponsorship, facilitating a broad community of incident response and management practitioners representing almost every emergency response profession. This effort represents outstanding project structure and SME participation. A seven-person TEP Steering Committee was assembled to work directly with the project team to propose details, consider stakeholder feedback, and make final decisions with justification. A greatly expanded stakeholder group was engaged to provide key expertise and ensure full representation of key domains and professions which will benefit from this effort. This process has consumed several months and a large number of meetings and conference calls, and established this proposed standard from several perspectives and through research and coordination with several existing efforts such as NEMSIS and NIEM.

In addition, the draft standard was further evaluated and improved through a successful draft TEP pilot integrated into the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) live exercise at the Tennessee Air National Guard 164th Airlift Wing in Memphis. This live
exercise used the FEMA OPEN system as a messaging broker, the EDXL-Distribution Element for routing, and a draft version of TEP to capture and share patient tracking information between five independent vendors currently procured with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), State of Maryland, State of Tennessee and local Memphis and Memphis hospitals. This multi-agency, mass casualty exercise utilized hand-held scanners and systems which had never before shared data electronically, by applying the TEP standard format to track and share information across each system. During the course of this exercise, sixty-six volunteer patients were scanned and tracked during C-130 aircraft boarding (simulated at BWI airport), deplaning at the 164th Airlift Wing in Memphis, during triage and loading into ambulances, and finally during receiving of patients at each of the 5 area hospitals. At every step of the process regardless of which system performed scanning and TEP send, each system received TEP messages providing updates with the most current information; including the receiving hospitals and from the hospitals back out to the originating systems.

As with previous EDXL practitioner requirements processes, a formal issues process was managed which documented every substantial issue, requiring that each commenter receive reply along with any agreed-upon changes to the specification. This excludes countless other interactions providing education, clarification and addressing minor questions and comments. TEP number of issues of all types and complexity include:

- Total Issues submitted: 289
  - Project Initiation Document (PID) comments: 156
  - Requirements and draft Messaging Specification comments: 133

A great deal of consideration, debate and subject matter expertise has been devoted to determination of best balance of elements to support this requirement, and in determination of required vs. optional elements for the TEP message. Compelling justification with approval by the TEP Steering Committee will be required in order to change submitted optionality definition.

The attached documents should enable the EM-TC to properly review the proposed standard to determine whether they fit with the EM-TC Charter, and represent a standards effort appropriate for the EM-TC to develop. The submission contains several artifacts; however the EDXL-TEP Project Initiation Document (PID) and the Requirements and draft Messaging Specification are core to this submission and inseparable for your consideration. The PID defines the standard purpose, background, objectives and scope while the specification drives out detailed requirements and draft design based upon the PID.

These documents are attached with this memo, but may also be found at the following website:  http://www.evotecinc.com/TEP/

- EDXL-TEP Requirements and Draft Messaging Specification:
  EDXL-TEP-Rqmts&draftMessagingSpecFinalV2.2_05-05-2010.pdf
- **EDXL-TEP Stakeholder issues list:**
  TEP-Stakeholder-IssuesRev2.2_05-7-2010.xls
  - This list applies an Excel filter to display only issues marked “open” or “in-process”, easing review of the very latest issue responses and disposition (“Resolution” column). To view all issues, simply remove the filter.

- **EDXL-TEP Data Dictionary:**
  TEPdictionaryV2.1.xls
  - Though included in the draft Messaging Specification in OASIS format, this excel file provides mappings to other efforts such as NEMSIS and NIEM which may provide a helpful reference and easy search capabilities.

- **EDXL-TEP Project Initiation Document:**
  EDXL-TEP Project Initiation Document (PID) v4.3.pdf

- **EDXL-TEP project subject matter experts**
  EDXL-TEP-Participants-FullList5-12-10.pdf
  - TEP Steering Committee, Stakeholders, vendors, and EDXL Practitioner Steering Group (PSG) and Standards working Group (SWG) list.

We would like to thank the Practitioner Steering Group (PSG) and Standards Working Group, and particularly the TEP Steering Committee and all of the newly engaged stakeholders for their valuable guidance and direction. We have received excellent input during each review period, and we are most appreciative of their time and attention. This expertise has driven key requirements which will provide the ability for seamless patient tracking across disparate locations, organizations and systems.

Fostering industry-based data interoperability standards is one of the key activities of the OIC and EIC. We are most appreciative of the excellent work that resulted from the cooperation between us and the EM-TC in bringing forth EDXL standards including the Distribution Element, Resource Messaging, Hospital Availability Exchange, Situation Reporting, and the Common Alerting Protocol. Given the urgent national need to address the interoperability problem with a coherent framework of valid national standards, it is requested that the EM-TC place a high priority upon this effort.

We therefore ask that you and the EM-TC review these materials at your earliest convenience and respond with your feedback and intentions. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to help you move this effort forward quickly.

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Office for Interoperability and Compatibility  
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Donald R. Ponikvar  
Chair  
Emergency Interoperability Consortium