



PRESS RELEASE

Exchange of Patient Health Records Emerges As Top Priority At Eighth Annual IHE Europe Connectathon

BRUSSELS – April 16, 2008 – The success in Europe for Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) was confirmed once more at the eighth IHE-Europe interoperability testing event, or Connectathon on 7-11 April in Oxford, England.

Over 300 engineers from 83 companies representing a majority of countries across the continent gathered at St. Catherine's College, Oxford testing the ability of their medical equipment to communicate with each other, or interoperate. This year vendors from Japan, Korea and the USA also took part.

More than 1850 interoperability tests were carried out over the five days, verified by a team of over 31 volunteer monitors led by Eric Poiseau (INRIA), IHE-Europe Technical Project Manager.

IHE covers 9 areas, called domains, which are essential for delivering healthcare services using computer support and information systems for patient monitoring, laboratory results and even assisting with surgeries. The IHE domains include IT infrastructure, radiology, cardiology, laboratory, radiation oncology, patient care coordination, patient care devices, pathology and pharmacy.

Exchanging radiology images and information was once again the leading domain tested during the Connectathon, but this year for the first time there was an equal number of tests conducted in the IT Infrastructure domain, particularly Cross-Enterprise Document Exchange (XDS) integration profiles.

IHE-Europe Technical Project Manager Poiseau said "the growing importance of electronic health records (EHR) in Austria, France, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom explains the increase in vendors testing IT Infrastructure interoperability. IHE specifications assure the reliability of patient health data exchanged within each national programme as well as across borders". -----

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Additional Information

The Connectathon provides a unique opportunity for application interoperability testing. Vendors identified and solved many bugs during the event. According to one vendor "the cost of identifying and solving a bug during a Connectathon is about 10 times less than the cost of a bug identified on site."

The results of the event will be published in the Connectathon Results table on the IHE-Europe website www.ihe-europe.org. Vendors may use IHE Integration Statements to show their products' compliance with the IHE Integration profiles. This is a clear advantage for vendors and users when responding to Requests for Proposals from user's sites.