

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS FOR ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING — GLOSSARY

Actual Cost of Medication to Patient – The cost paid for a medication by a patient at the pharmacy. If the medication is on the patient’s benefit formulary the actual cost is their co-pay or co-insurance. If the patient has exceeded their drug benefit cap it would be an estimate of the price they would pay.

Alert – A message intended for immediate review by the prescriber, generally interrupting the usual workflow, and often demanding an acknowledgement. Alerts rely on decision support rules to be triggered.

Audit trail – A record of user actions taken within an information system that allows monitoring of the data that users have viewed. Audit trails help in monitoring data privacy and in the investigation of privacy breaches.

Class of drugs – A grouping of similar drugs, organized according to a classification system, such as the AHFS Pharmacologic-Therapeutic Classification[®].

Contraindications – An element of drug information, usually provided by the pharmaceutical manufacturer, that lists patient situations in which a medication should not be used because the risk of use clearly outweighs any possible benefit.

Corollary orders – Orders for tests or medications that should generally accompany an initial order. For example, an order for serum drug levels made along with an order for a potentially toxic medication would represent a corollary order.

Corporate sponsorships – Investments, loans, grants, or any other form of support provided by a corporation to any entity involved in the electronic prescribing process, including vendors and health care provider organizations.

Data Security – Protection of patient data from unauthorized access or alteration.

Data Confidentiality – Protection of patient data from disclosures or uses that violate patient privacy.

Decision Support – Any activity of the electronic prescribing system intended to influence the prescriber's decisions. Alerts, reminders, tailored menus, and many non-alert messages would constitute decision support.

Decision Support Rules – If-then statements that trigger the delivery of decision support based on particular preconditions being met.

Dispensed – The state of a prescription in which the medication has been prepared and delivered for administration. In the outpatient setting, a prescription is dispensed when the medication is picked up from the pharmacy.

Drug benefit cap – A dollar limit that some health plans place on the drug expenditures that will be covered for patients during a particular period.

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EMR (electronic medical record) – An electronic information system intended to store and retrieve documentation of all aspects of patient care, to fulfill the needs of communication as well as legal and financial requirements.

Formulary – A circumscribed list of the drugs that are normally available at a particular health care location (e.g., hospital or pharmacy) or that are normally covered by a particular health plan.

HL7 (Health Level Seven) – An ANSI-accredited Standards Development Organization charged with providing standards for the exchange, management and integration of data that support clinical patient care and the management, delivery and evaluation of healthcare services. The HL7 standards relevant to e-prescribing systems include those for transmitting laboratory results, allergies, medical conditions, and prescription data.

Message – Any communication targeted to an individual prescriber. Messages may be delivered at the point-of-care or asynchronously via e-mail. Messages are often, but not always, intended to influence prescriber's actions.

Monitoring tests – Laboratory tests indicated to monitor the effects or the potential toxicity of a medication. Liver enzyme tests, for example, are indicated to monitor the effects of many lipid-lowering agents.

NCPDP (National Council of Prescription Drug Programs) – A trade organization that (among other activities) publishes the SCRIPT standard for online pharmaceutical fulfillment transactions.

(PMS) Practice management system – An information system that supports administrative aspects of an outpatient practice, such as patient scheduling and billing.

Precautions – An element of drug information that explains any special care to be exercised by the practitioner and/or patient for the safe and effective use of the medication.

Prescriber – A health care provider who completes prescribing transactions. This is commonly a physician, but can include a nurse practitioner or physician's assistant under a physician's supervision.

Promotional considerations – Payments or in-kind support provided to vendors, providers, or any other third party, in exchange for their promoting a medication or group of medications.

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Regimen tailoring – The action of specifying an appropriate medication regimen (including dose form, frequency, etc.) after the decision has been made to prescribe a particular class of medication for a particular clinical goal.

Reminder – A message, intended to prevent errors of omission, which may or may not interrupt the prescriber's workflow.

Sponsorship of a message – Direct payment for a message to a vendor, medical group or intermediary.

Tailored Menu – A presentation of ordering options in which the options have been tailored for a particular patient or setting.

User – Any person who interacts directly with an electronic prescribing system. In addition to the prescriber, users may include nurses, other office staff, and, theoretically, patients themselves.