EHR Developer Code of Conduct
Preface

Established in 2004, the Electronic Health Record Association (the Association) is currently comprised of more than 30 companies that supply the vast majority of operational EHRs to physicians' practices and hospitals across the United States. The EHR Association operates on the premise that the rapid, widespread adoption of EHRs will, as a key enabler of healthcare transformation, help improve the quality of patient care as well as the productivity and sustainability of our healthcare system.

The Association is the primary organization through which EHR developers collaborate on industry issues, and we are pleased to take the lead in developing this Code. The Association and its members are committed to supporting safe healthcare delivery, fostering continued innovation, and operating with high integrity in the market for our users and their patients and families. Recognizing the transformative power of health IT, we put forward the initial version of the EHR Developer Code of Conduct in June 2013, and issued this revision of the Code of Conduct in March 2016 as a reflection of our industry's ongoing commitment to collaborate as trusted partners with all stakeholders.

This Code of Conduct applies to EHR developers, which might be stand-alone companies or divisions or business units of companies with other non-EHR lines of business. As we are mindful of the laws and regulations that affect our clients, as well as the important role of health IT in their environments, the Code is intended to complement related government actions, not supersede or duplicate them.

The EHR Association offers this Code of Conduct to all organizations that develop EHRs, regardless of Association membership. In consultation with other stakeholders across the healthcare industry, the EHR Association will continue to periodically update this Code of Conduct.

EHR Developer Code of Conduct
Principles

As a company that develops electronic health records (EHRs) and provides health IT software and services, we are committed to the following principles.

General

- **We support the key goals of high quality, safe and efficient patient care, interoperable exchange and use of health information, usability, and patient engagement, and will work with our clients toward these ends.**
- **Our business practices emphasize accurate communication with clients and prospects about the functionality, cost components, and benefits of our products and services.**

Patient Safety

Recognizing that patient safety is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders in an increasingly health IT-enabled, learning healthcare system:

- **We are committed to product design, development, and deployment in support of patient safety.** We use such approaches as quality management systems (QMS) and base our work on recognized standards and guidelines where applicable and feasible.
- **We will participate with one or more recognized bodies (for example, Patient Safety Organizations) in reporting, reviewing, and analyzing health IT-related patient safety events.** The exact nature, extent, and timing of our participation will depend on the outcome of current industry and policy discussions; such factors as legislative and regulatory changes, or agency guidance; the availability of the appropriate recognized organizations; development of standardized definitions for safety events; and other implementation factors. We will collaborate closely with our clients to this end.
- **We will share best practices with our clients for safe deployment, implementation, maintenance, and use of our products and services.**
- **We have processes for our clients to report to us on patient safety-related issues.** We encourage our clients to identify and communicate to us patient safety issues discovered during implementation, maintenance, and use of EHRs. If a patient contacts us directly, we will follow up using the same or similar processes.
- **We will notify our clients and offer solutions should we identify or become aware of a software issue that could materially affect patient safety.**
- **We recognize the value of our users' participation in discussions about patient safety.** We will not contractually limit our clients from exchanging information about patient safety issues in appropriate venues.

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Usability

- **We are committed to using both a quality management system (QMS) and user-centered design (UCD) and usability best practices in our development and implementation processes, engaging our users throughout as appropriate.** We will share with users and prospective users, upon request, what UCD and QMS standard or standards we follow.
- **In designing and developing our solutions, we utilize team members who are experts in usability, and we support ongoing internal education on usability techniques and research.**
- **We provide users with opportunities to participate in the design and refinement of our products and give feedback.** Such opportunities may take many forms, such as formative and/or summative usability testing, focus groups, users' group meetings, client surveys, and/or ethnographic research.
- **We will make available to our clients guidance, informed by usability perspectives, on best practices in relation to implementation and configuration of our products.**

Interoperability and Data Portability

Recognizing that data should follow the patient:
- **We will enable, to the greatest extent possible, our clients to exchange clinical information with other parties involved in the care of a patient, including those using other EHR systems, through standards-based technology.**
- **We will use available, recognized, and nationally-uniform standards to the greatest extent possible in developing interfaces.**
- **As clients implement interfaces and work to achieve interoperability, we will share best practices with them about safe deployment, implementation, and use of the supporting tools and technologies.**
- **We will work with our clients to facilitate export of patient data if a client chooses to move from one EHR to another.** We will enable, at a minimum, the export of one or more standards-based clinical summary formats such as CCD/CCDA (or the then-current equivalent) for all patients.
- **We will be transparent, to the greatest reasonable extent, with clients regarding pricing and costs to our clients related to interoperability products and services that we offer.** We will also provide information on other potential products and services provided by third parties necessary for interoperability with our EHR.
- **Given our strong support for interoperability, adherents to the Code do not engage in data blocking.**

Clinical and Billing Documentation

- **Our software, services, and business practices will support our clients' needs to efficiently and accurately document care provided, and to document in accordance with regulatory requirements.**
- **We will make available to our clients information about our products' approaches to clinical documentation, coding, and quality measurement, examples of which include coding guidelines**

referenced, conformity with applicable regulatory and documentation standards, or the source of a quality measure.

Privacy and Security

- **We are committed to developing and implementing our software, services, and business practices in ways that protect patients' privacy through the secure and trusted handling of protected health information (PHI).**
- **We are committed to following best practices for handling PHI or other confidential information when we are stewards of such information.**
- **We will adopt relevant standards for protection of electronic PHI.** Such actions may include, but are not limited to, use of industry standards for encryption, hashing, or access control.
- **We will make available to our clients information about our approaches to privacy and security.** We will provide our clients with information on best practices for using our products to support their privacy and security responsibilities.

Patient Engagement

- **We recognize that EHRs can enable increased engagement by patients and families in their healthcare, support patient-centered healthcare, and shared decision-making. We will reflect this understanding and its importance in our business practices and product development.** Patients and families may not be our direct clients. Nonetheless, we understand and appreciate that they are the beneficiaries and, in some cases, the direct users of EHR technology.
- **We are committed to developing and providing standards-based capabilities that support our clients in enabling patients and their representatives to access and use their clinical data.** We will continue to work with our clients on new or expanded patient engagement capabilities to meet their needs and those of their patients, for example, as they increasingly participate in new payment and delivery models.

Implementation of the EHR Developer Code of Conduct

- **By adopting the Code, we are stating that we will adhere to all of its principles and will have practices in place to apply these principles.** Adopting the Code is a commitment to the entirety of the principles. Such practices could include training staff about their obligations under the Code of Conduct; monitoring business adoption; publicizing adoption of the Code of Conduct to clients, prospects, and partners; and being responsive to questions or concerns related to our adoption of the EHR Developer Code of Conduct.

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