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About the Cluster

The New Zealand Health IT Cluster is a vibrant alliance of organisations interested in health IT, comprising software and solution developers, consultants, health policy makers, health funders, infrastructure companies, healthcare providers, and academic institutions - who have agreed to work collaboratively.

Our Vision

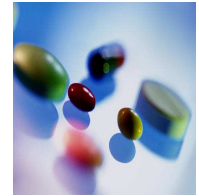
Uniting organisations to position New Zealand as a leader in the supply and use of innovative health technology.

Our Objectives

- ✓ building collaborative relationships
- ✓ initiating, facilitating and managing collaborative projects
- ✓ enhancing the business development capabilities of members
- ✓ promoting Government investment and funding
- ✓ advocating/promoting the NZ health IT sector
- ✓ communicating and facilitating opportunities
- ✓ developing innovative revenue streams

E-PHARMACY - PERSPECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

A NZ HEALTH IT CLUSTER REPORT : MAY 2006



E-Pharmacy has been on the E-Health agenda for some time now, with a number of the components of E-Pharmacy already implemented in the sector. Implementation efforts to date however have tended to be adhoc rather than part of a planned E-Pharmacy vision and strategy.

In recognition of its importance E-Pharmacy is now formally part of the strategic information systems landscape, with the inclusion of the E-Pharmacy Action Zone in the Health Information Strategy for New Zealand 2005 (HIS-NZ).

The New Zealand Health IT Cluster (NZHITC) wished to be proactive and provide input to the E-Pharmacy Action Zone, particularly as it enters the scoping and planning phase. A number of the NZHITC members have implemented parts of E-Pharmacy and are very aware of their customer's needs and the implementation challenges. In view of this the Ministry of Health asked the NZ Health IT Cluster to scope the provision of E-Pharmacy in New Zealand.

Approach

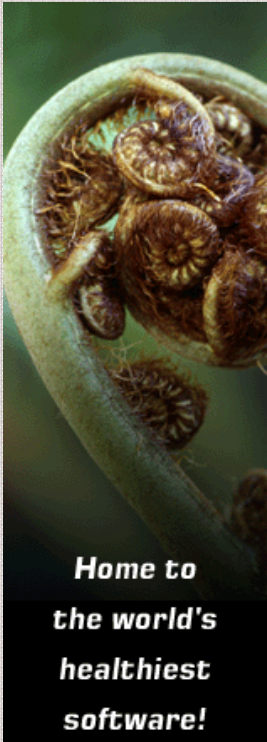
In February 2006 the NZHITC sent a questionnaire and supporting reference documents to NZHITC Clinical and Technical Working Groups seeking their responses to high level questions on E-Pharmacy. The purpose was to develop a NZHITC E-Pharmacy related view for presentation to the Ministry of Health and the Health Information Strategy Action Committee (HISAC) as input to HIS-NZ E-Pharmacy Action Zone 4.

The NZHITC report provides a perspective on E-Pharmacy including the key survey findings and recommendations, and outlines the next steps to progress E-Pharmacy in New Zealand.

Key Findings

Analysis of the survey responses are summarised as:

- There is no consistent interpretation of the E-Pharmacy vision and scope,
- The objectives of E-Pharmacy are:
 - Improved patient safety / better patient health outcomes,
 - Standardisation of data, information exchange, and business processes,
 - Improved and timely monitoring, tracking, and reporting, and
 - Improved healthcare administration and cost-effectiveness;
- The benefits of E-Pharmacy broadly fit into three groups:
 - Better patient health outcomes / clinical safety,
 - Improved healthcare administration and expenditure, and
 - Improved and timely monitoring, tracking, and reporting;
- There are a number of high-level dispensing models that could be adopted for E-Prescribing, including:
 - Submit prescriptions to a dispensary at the time the prescription is created, and dispense pharmaceuticals in advance of patient arrival,
 - Submit prescriptions to a dispensary at the time the prescription is created, and dispense pharmaceuticals when the patient presents,



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Our Role

We work directly with key Government agencies such as the Ministry of Health, NZ Trade & Enterprise, and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology to help Cluster members to grow their business in their chosen markets.

Membership Categories

Health IT Companies
Supporting Members
Healthcare Provider
Members
Academic Members
Individual Members

Join now

If your organisation has an interest in health IT, a significant presence in New Zealand, and wants to collaborate with other sector participants.

- Prescriptions are created and submitted to a central data store for a dispensary to download and dispense when the patient presents, and
- Prescriptions are created and electronically submitted to a dispensing clearing-house where they are packaged for delivery to a specified address;
- A number of building blocks are in place upon which E-Pharmacy can be built and advanced quite quickly. However, there are also some important building blocks that need to be put in place, including
 - Agree the definition and scope of E-Pharmacy and its components, and guiding principles,
 - Specify the business and technical requirements, and solution architecture for E-Pharmacy, and
 - Identify and/or define the critical standards for E-Pharmacy, in particular standards for data, medicines terminology, coding, information exchange, security, and business process;
- There are also important barriers to overcome; in particular addressing privacy and security concerns, issues around liability, and the Medicines Regulations and Electronics Transactions Act restrictions;
- E-Pharmacy is an achievable proposition. It requires the establishment of an implementation project or programme of work that provides for a phased approach to delivering E-Pharmacy, with an emphasis on the core enabling components (building blocks); and
- There is a desire and a willingness across the health and disability IT sector to collaborate to make E-Pharmacy a reality as soon as is practically possible.

Key Recommendations

The key NZHITC recommendations are:

- I. That the NZHITC report be accepted as input to the HIS-NZ Action Zone 4 (E-Pharmacy) preliminary scoping project;
- II. That consideration be given to amending the definition of E-Pharmacy in the HIS-NZ glossary of terms to include other healthcare service providers, regulatory, and funding and payment agencies, and reference to health outcomes and patient safety;
- III. That E-Prescribing be confirmed as the core enabling transaction for the wider scope of E-Pharmacy;
- IV. That the implementation of E-Pharmacy be managed incrementally with an initial focus on the core enabling components (building blocks), then incrementally those that deliver significant benefits across the continuum of healthcare;
- V. That NZHITC consults with HISAC to determine what further assistance it can provide in relation to the E-Pharmacy Action Zone, including developing an E-Pharmacy Architecture Options Analysis report;
- VI. That priority be given to specifying the high-level business and technical requirements for E-Pharmacy, and assessment of the solution options; and
- VII. That an initial assessment of the standards requirements for E-Pharmacy be undertaken as soon as possible.

More information

To obtain a copy of the NZHITC report 'E-Pharmacy Perspectives and Implementation Considerations' please go to the NZHITC 'library' section of our web site www.healthit.org.nz.

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