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HSCA ANNOUNCES IMPROVED ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE PRODUCT INFORMATION AND SUPPLY CHAIN DATA THROUGH 'TOTAL VISBILITY PROJECT'

Data Standard Improves Patient Safety and Hospital Access to Timely and Accurate Product Data; Supply Chain Group Urges More Suppliers to Publish Product Data to Ensure Safety and Efficiency

Washington, DC (October 24, 2016) – The Healthcare Supply Chain Association's (HSCA) Committee for Healthcare eStandards (CHeS) announced today that healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs) and their provider members saw an average increase of 13 percent in the availability of relevant product information published to the Global Data Synchronization Network (GDSN) from fall 2015 to spring 2016. As part of the *Total Visibility Project*, which HSCA launched in 2014 in collaboration with GS1 and the Healthcare Industry Supply Chain Institute (HISCI), suppliers voluntarily publish a set of common, minimum product attributes to help ensure that hospitals and other providers have timely access to reliable product information.

"The CHeS data synchronization and product attribute study shows real momentum in the adoption of supply chain data standards. However, there is still more work to do to ensure that the entire supply chain realizes the full safety and efficiency benefits of global standards," said CHeS executive director Curt Miller. "Although participating GPOs revealed an average of more than 204,000 items for which product information was available, items published to the GDSN still represent substantially less than half of all items present in a typical GPO catalog. We encourage all suppliers to openly publish item information to the GDSN so that the industry can reach a critical mass of standardized item information and help ensure that the right product gets to the right patient at the right time."

To provide hospitals access to accurate product data information, HSCA and its GPO members engage in data synchronization through the Global Data Synchronization Network (GDSN). This automated, standards-based global environment is used for the electronic transfer of standardized product information between trading partners and helps support secure, continuous data synchronization over time. The *Total Visibility Project* enables an initial, one-time publication of product data for all participating GPOs and their hospital and provider members.

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"Implementation of standardized supply chain data will improve the transaction process and price accuracy, particularly when both Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) and Global Location Numbers (GLNs) are used," said Ricki Wilson, CHeS chair and director of standards implementation for Vizient, Inc. "Data synchronization through the Total Visibility Project will enhance overall supply chain efficiency by reducing costs associated with resolving errors and improving data analytics and benchmarking."

"The ability to track recalls, lot numbers and product expirations will enhance patient safety. Greater availability of product data will also lead to a reduction in medical errors, improved adverse event reporting, and better management of product recalls," said Melanie McMeekan, Vice President of Business Solutions at HealthTrust.

"In order for all supply chain participants to realize the associated benefits, it is critical that suppliers adopt data standards and publish openly to the GDSN. In support of our efforts around data synchronization, CHeS endorses supplier use of the GTIN to satisfy the FDA's Unique Device Identification (UDI) regulations," said Carl Gomberg, lead solution analyst at Premier Inc.

"Data synchronization not only benefits GPOs and healthcare providers. Publishing item information to the GDSN that is consistent with the *Total Visibility Project* is the most efficient and least costly method for suppliers to disseminate item information. Once a supplier publishes information, it is immediately available to the industry," said Mark Whitman, director of supply chain diagnostic services at Intalere. "Many attributes beyond those that are required can also be published to the GDSN, allowing suppliers to easily communicate additional information, such as automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) or environmental attributes to the healthcare community."

For more information about HSCA, visit www.supplchainassociation.org
For more information about CHeS, visit http://www.supplychainassociation.org/About_CHeS
For more information about the *Total Visibility Project*, visit
http://www.supplychainassociation.org/CHeS_TotalVisibility

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About the Healthcare Supply Chain Association (HSCA)
The Healthcare Supply Chain Association (HSCA) represents the nation's leading healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs), which are critical cost-savings partners to America's hospitals, nursing homes, nursing home pharmacies, clinics, home healthcare providers and surgery centers. GPOs deliver billions in savings annually to healthcare providers, Medicare and Medicaid, and taxpayers. HSCA and its member GPOs are committed to delivering the best products at the best value to healthcare providers, to increasing competition and innovation in the market, and to being supply chain leaders in transparency and accountability. For more information, visit www.supplychainassociation.org. Follow HSCA on Twitter @HSCA.

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