

March 31, 2021

Charles Jaffe, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Health Level Seven International
3300 Washtenaw Avenue, Suite 227
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear Dr. Jaffe:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for the Health Level Seven (HL7) Electronic Health Records (EHR) Workgroup's Clinician Burden Impact Statement.

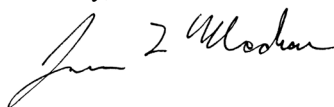
Stress and burnout associated with the design and use of health information technology (health IT) continues to impact physician wellbeing and care for patients. Research has shown that physicians spend two hours on EHR tasks for every hour they spend face-to-face with the patient.¹ The introduction of EHRs has significantly shifted clerical work to physicians and created new clinical tasks for physicians to complete during patient encounters. Decisions made during the development and implementation stages of health IT can increase the cognitive and physical load on physicians. For example, nearly half of physicians exhibit at least one symptom of burnout.²

Reducing physician burden associated with health IT requires a holistic approach and must involve stakeholders across the entire health care ecosystem. Improvements in usability are occurring—often because EHR vendors are increasingly engaged with their customers. User-centered design methods are helping to connect physicians with EHR vendors, informing software design based on user experience and need. This approach, if replicated, could prove valuable in educating standards developers, system designers, and implementers about real-world clinical workflows.

The AMA is encouraged that HL7 is embarking on a community-oriented re-envisioning strategy that provides value to all stakeholders. The Clinician Burden Impact Statement is an important first step in encouraging standards developers and implementers to consider the impact their decisions have on physician end-users, and we support its inclusion in all HL7 project proposals and implementation guides. The Clinician Burden Impact Statement may also help to establish a baseline burden level for implementation guides against which future iterations of implementation guides can be evaluated.

The AMA looks forward to continuing to work with the HL7 community to reduce physician burden and improve health IT usability and value. If you have any questions, please contact Celine Lefebvre, Sr. Policy Analyst, Administrative Simplification Initiatives at celine.lefebvre@ama-assn.org.

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD

¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucejapsen/2016/09/06/for-every-hour-with-patients-doctors-spend-two-record-keeping/?sh=7b9b22d52950>

² <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318037>