

# Healthcare in the 21st Century: Why Interoperability is Important

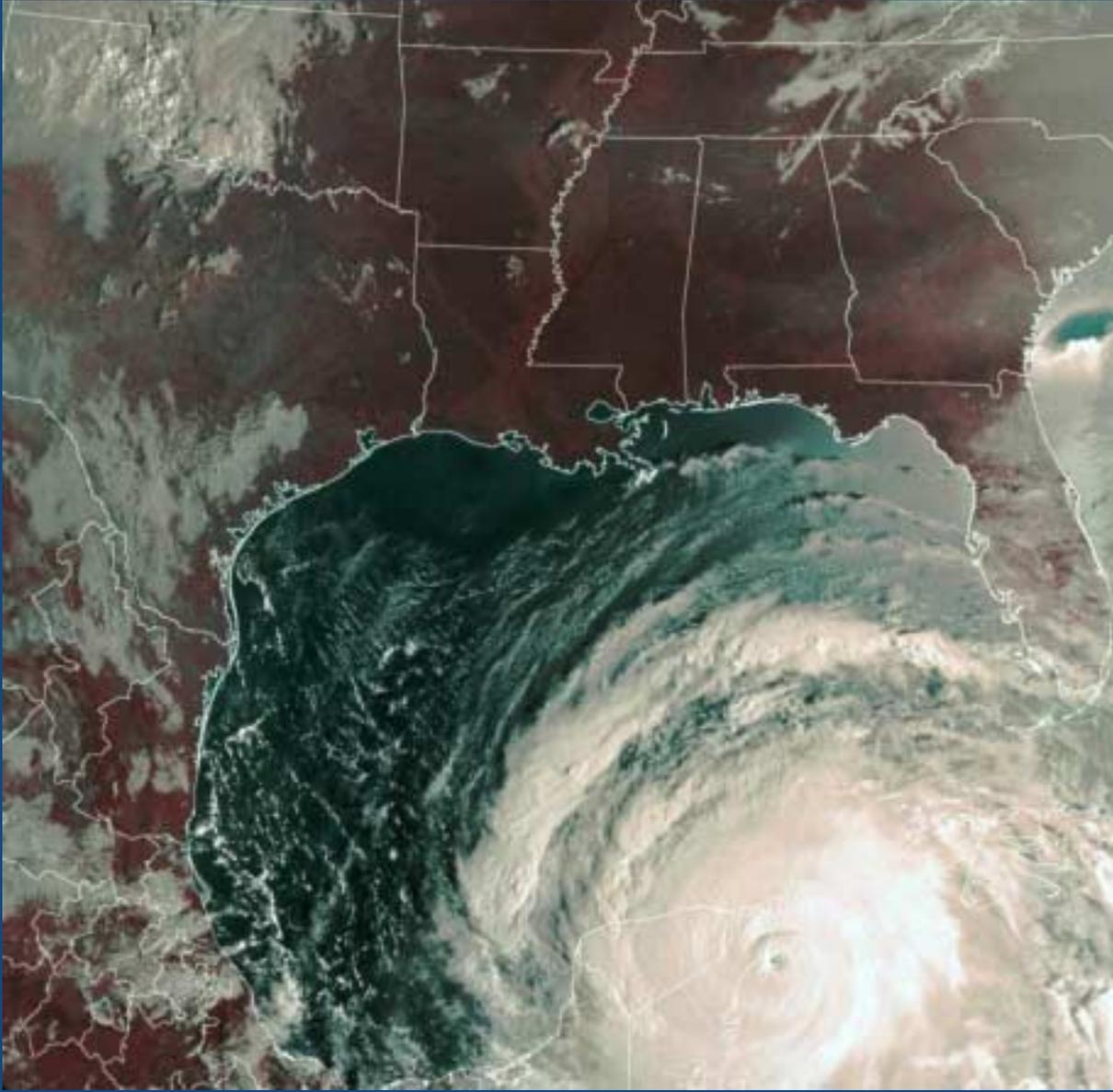
October 2005



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MedicAlert Foundation

OMG / HL7 Healthcare Interoperability Workshop  
OMG Healthcare Domain Task Force  
HL7 Services Specification Project Workgroup

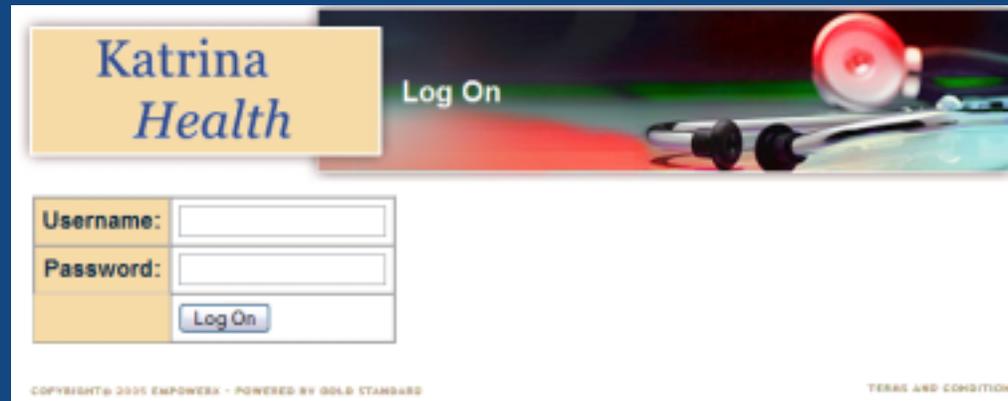
# ☼☼ Hurricane Katrina



# ⋮⋮ Bob and Foo



# ⋮⋮ KatrinaHealth.org



Katrina  
Health

Log On

Username:

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Log On

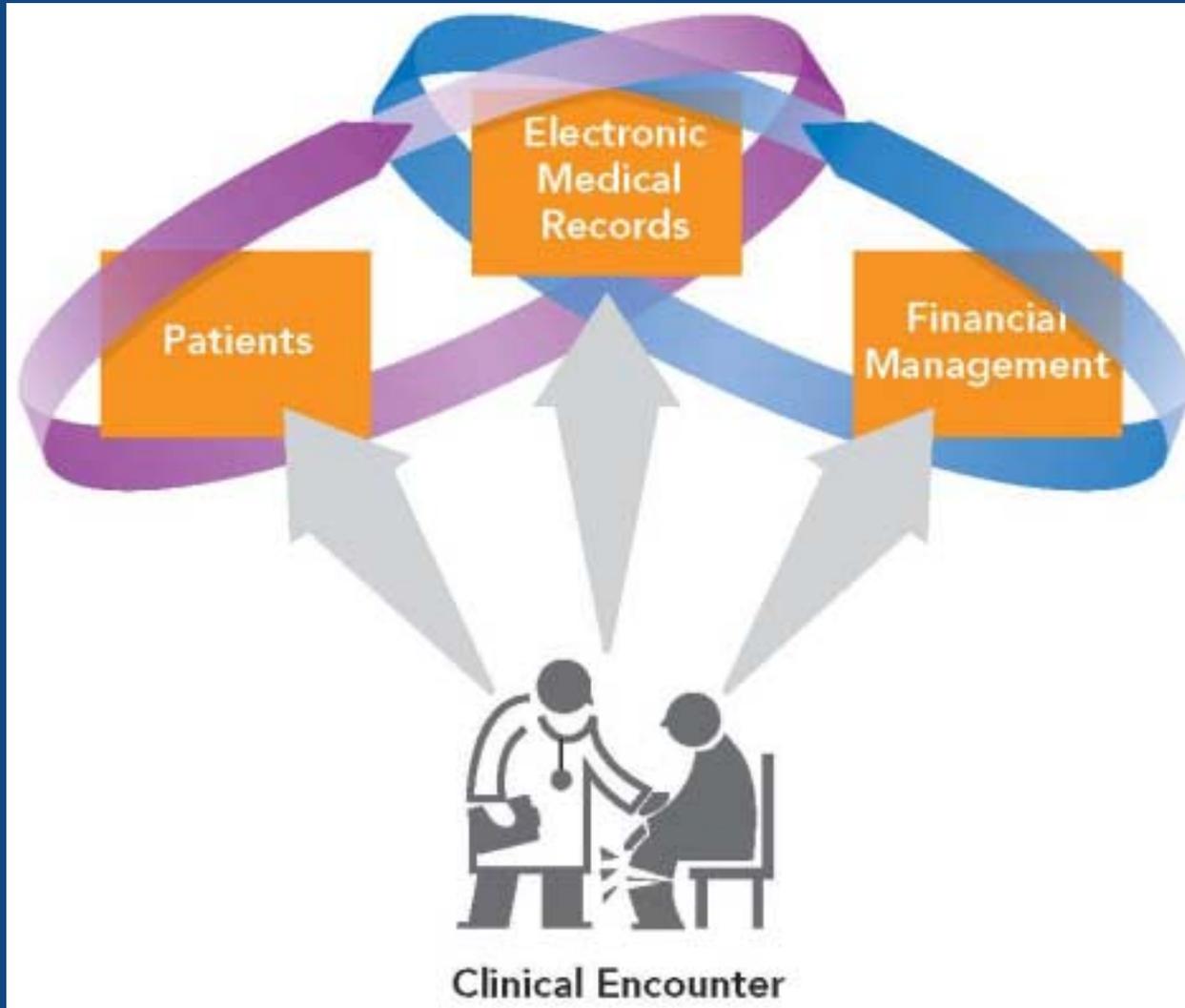
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

*“KatrinaHealth.org demonstrates the commitment of the health information technology industry leaders to work toward a safer and more effective healthcare system. This is the first of many public and private sector efforts to develop new tools that will make a real difference in the lives of people.”*

**Source:** HIT National Coordinator, David Brailer, MD, PhD, KatrinaHealth.org, September 22, 2005.

# ⋮⋮ Healthcare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



# ⋮⋮ MedicAlert: 50 Years of Service



From the bracelet...



...to the mainframe...

...to the Rolodex...



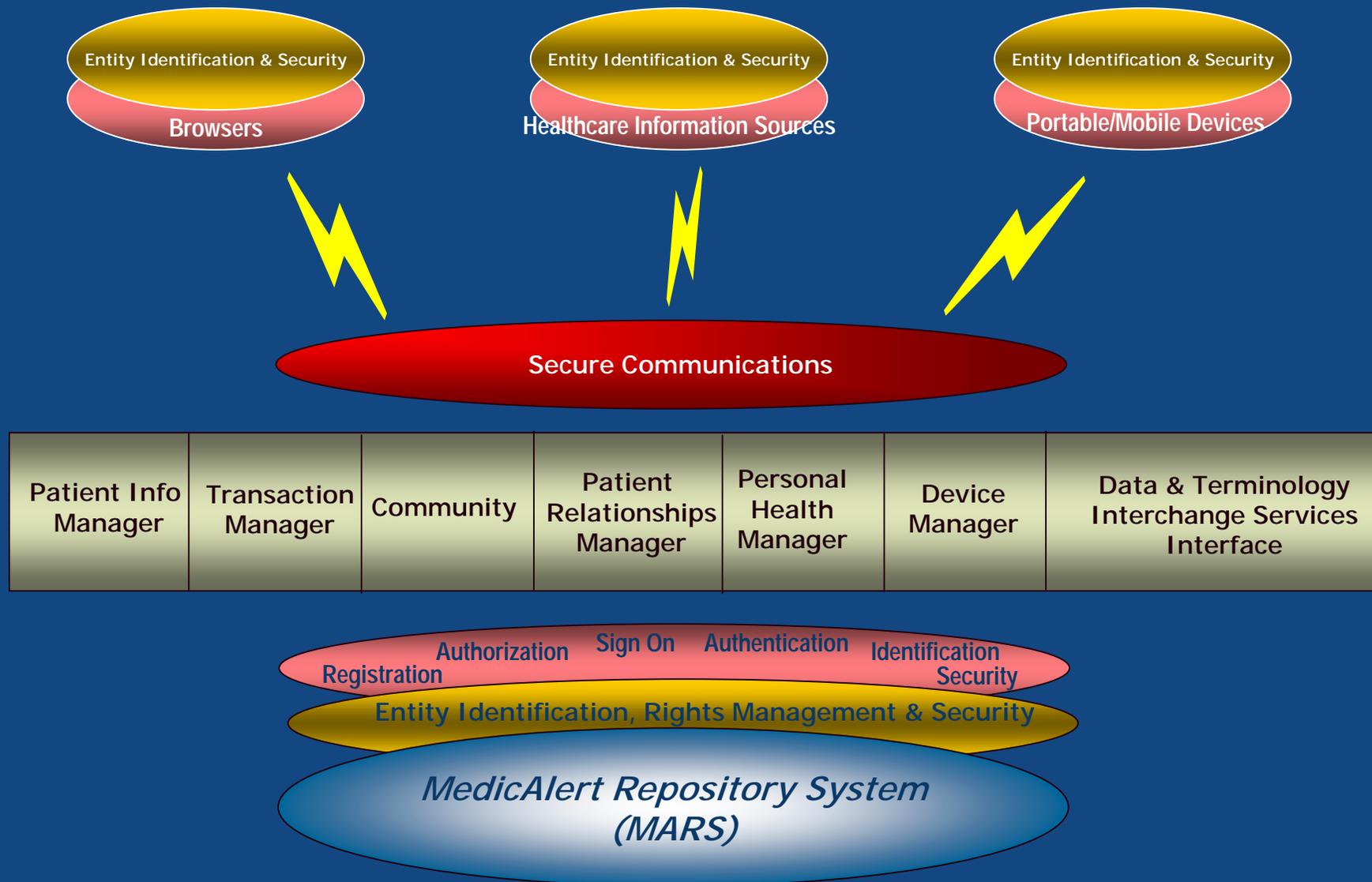
... to the Tab listing...



... to the PC...

... to the World Wide Web

# ⋮⋮⋮ The Network Health Record





# What is the Healthcare Service Specification Project?

- An effort to create common “service interface specifications” tractable within Health IT
- A joint standards development project involving Health Level 7 (HL7) and the Object Management Group (OMG)
- Its objectives are:
  - To create useful, usable healthcare standards that address functions, semantics and technologies
  - To complement existing work and leverage existing standards
  - To focus on **practical** needs and **not perfection**
  - To capitalize on industry talent through open community participation



# Why “common services” and not just “messages”?\*

- A common practice in healthcare, just not yet in healthcare IT
- Many key products use them but do not expose interfaces
- Ensures functional consistency across applications
- Accepted industry best practice
- Furthers authoritative sources of data
- Minimizes duplication across applications, reuse
- Messages can be either payloads in or infrastructure beneath services
- Service-oriented architecture is just automation of common services

\*slide adapted from a Veterans Health Administration Presentation, used with permission

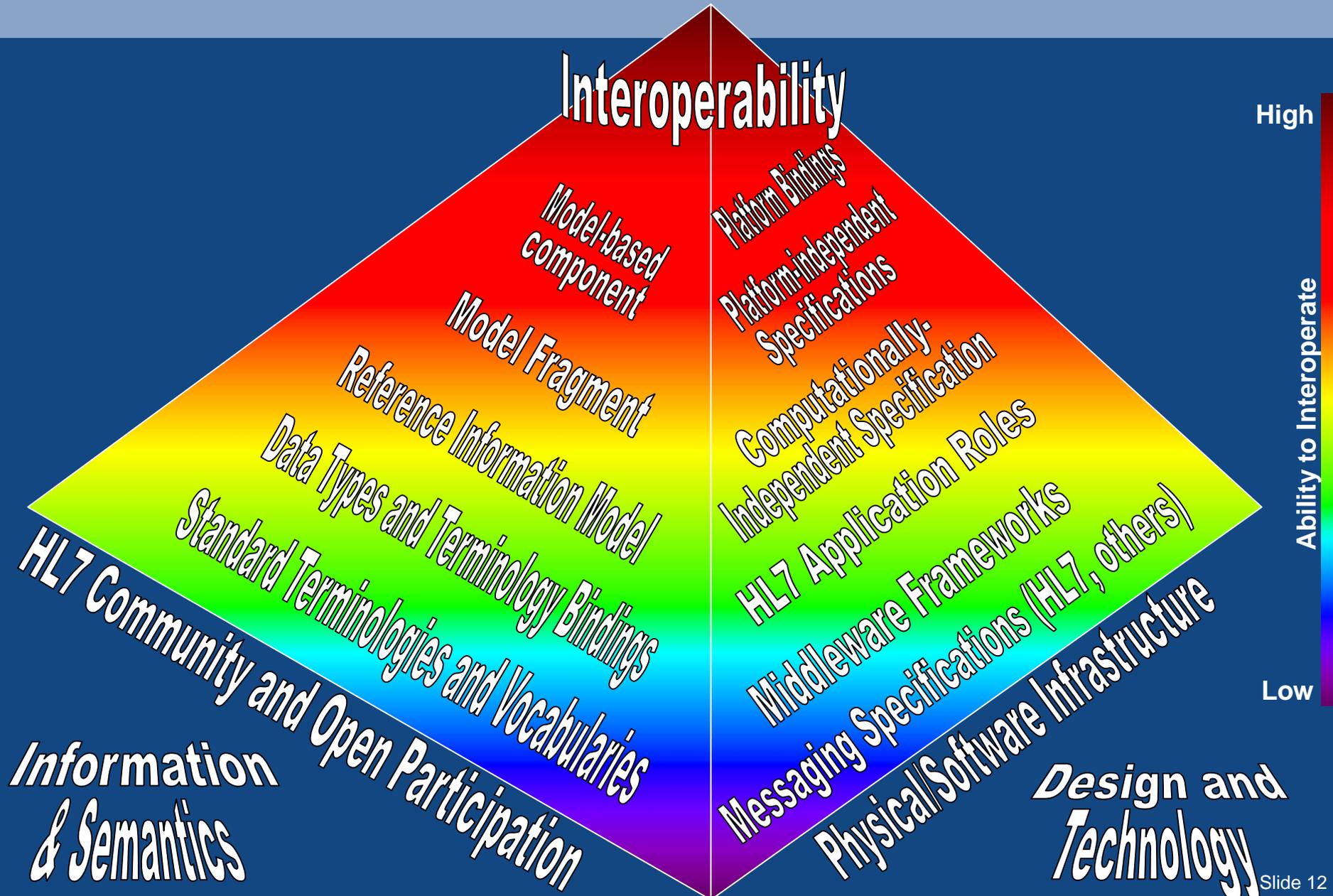
# Where would these specifications be used

- Inter-Enterprise (such as NHIN, RHIOs, LHINs)
  - By functionally specifying behavior, roles between applications and products are clarified, and the technologies supporting them can be profiled and sharpened
- Intra-Enterprise
  - Standardization on functionality allows for better integration of off-the-shelf and custom development environments, and promotes more of a “plug and play” environment
- Intra-Product
  - Facilitates vendors ability to integrate third-party value-add components and speed design phase with higher confidence
- Custom-Implementation
  - Affords organizations wishing to custom-develop the opportunity to later integrate off-the-shelf

# ••• The Approach

- HL7 to lead in service selection, functional elaboration, and conformance criteria
- OMG to lead in technical specification
- Both organizations jointly participate in all activities
- Work products will be “owned” by only one organization but used collaboratively
- “Operate as one project” as a principle
- Actively seek vendor participation
- Engage IHE community

∴∴ Greater than the Sum of its Parts...



# Project Timeline and Roadmap

1996: First OMG Healthcare Service Spec Adopted (PIDS?)

2003: HL7 ServicesBOF formed

2004 September: HL7, OMG Collaboration MOU

2005 January: Joint Project Chartered

2005 April: Project Kickoff

2005 September: Methodology and MetaSpecs Baselined (planned)

2005 October: Interoperability Services Workshop & Conference

2006 January: Functional Specs Ballot (planned)

2006 Q4: Technical Specs RFP (planned)

# ⋮⋮ How is this project “different”?

- Active participation from three continents and 15+ organizations
- Significant cross-cutting community involvement
  - **Providers** (Kaiser, VHA, Intermountain Health, Mayo)
  - **Vendors** (CSW Group, IBM, PatientKeeper, Universata)
  - **Value-added Providers** (MedicAlert, Ocean Informatics, Eclipse Foundation, etc.)
  - **Payers** (Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Kaiser)
  - **Integrators** (IBM, EDS)
  - **Governments** (Veterans Health Administration, Canada Health Infoway, HealthConnect (Australia), SerAPI (Finland))
- Managing differences between SDOs in terms of membership, intellectual property, and cost models

# ⋮⋮ Why should I participate? [One]

- This effort is focused on and driven by business-need
  - It is not an “academic exercise” striving for perfection
  - Acknowledgement that for standards to be useful they must be used
  - Focused on the practical and achievable
  - Short timelines
  - Based upon business value and ROI
- Leveraging talent from two standards communities
- Up-front commitment ensures community engagement
- Being run like a “project” and not a committee
- Recognize participation as an investment and not an expense

## ⋮⋮ Why should I participate? [Two]

- This is happening—the only way to influence the outcome is to engage
- Significant “networking” opportunities—you will gain access to the best and brightest in the industry and the world
- Prime opportunity to directly engage with complementing stakeholder groups (provider-to-vendor, vendor-to-payer, SDO-to-SDO, etc)
- Benefit from “lessons learned” from others
- Reduce design burden
- Establish market presence and mindshare as industry leader

# ⋮⋮ How do I Participate?

- Join appropriate standards organizations
  - HL7 for functional work
  - OMG for technical specification work
  - Join both
- Allocate resources to actively engage in the project
  - Engage existing, knowledgeable resources in the areas they are working already.
  - Subgroups form based on industry need and priority
  - Teleconferences are weekly; meetings approximately bimonthly

# References

- HL7 Website:
  - <http://www.hl7.org>
- OMG Website:
  - <http://www.omg.org>
- Services Project Homepage
  - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ServicesSpec>

# Welcome!

