# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Purpose**

The Companion Guide to Consolidated Clinical Document Architecture (C-CDA) provides supplemental guidance to the Health Level Seven (HL7) CDA® R2 IG: C-CDA Templates for Clinical Notes DSTU Release 2.1 in support of the ONC 2015 Edition Certified Electronic Health Record Technology (CEHRT) requirements.

This guide provides additional technical clarification and practical guidance to assist implementers to meet requirements of the 2015 Edition Health Information Technology (Health IT) Certification Criteria, 2015 Edition Base Electronic Health Record (EHR) Definition, and ONC Health IT Certification.

* Explain basic CDA concepts that are important to understand, prior to implementing the 2015 Ed. CEHRT requirements.
* Provide guidance on the 2015 Edition CEHRT requirements and data representation in the C-CDA format, including mappings to the CDA templates included in the C-CDA Implementation Guide.
* Highlight additional guidance and resources relevant to the 2015 Edition Health Information Technology (Health IT) Certification Criteria, 2015 Edition Base Electronic Health Record (EHR) Definition, and ONC Health IT Certification.

**1.2. Governance and Maintenance**

The Companion Guide has been developed under the management of HL7 as part of a grant awarded to HL7 by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC). The guidance in the Companion Guide reflects implementation experience and input from healthcare community stakeholders, and feedback from surveys and in-person “Implementation-a-thons” conducted by HL7.

It has been developed through a detailed analysis and review of the 2015 Edition CEHRT requirements, reviews with HL7 Working Groups, and reviews by experienced implementers and “Implementation-a-thons” participants.

Although “MU3” will be replaced by MACRA, requirements to use C-CDA will remain under MACRA’s “Advancing Care Information” requirement which carries forward some of the 2015 Edition certification and MU3 requirements, particularly those for Care Coordination.

## **1.3. Audience**

The audience of this Companion Guide includes, but is not limited to, software developers, vendors, and other health IT implementers wishing to adhere to the 2015 Edition Health IT Certification Criteria for certified electronic health record technology (CEHRT). This guide also includes educational content and resource references to assist in understanding C-CDA for general audiences.

## **1.4. Requisite Knowledge**

Readers of the Companion Guide are assumed to have functional knowledge of the HL7 Reference Information Model (RIM), the base CDA R2 specification and C-CDA R2.1. They should have familiarity with HL7 RIM data types and the use of value set bindings. Readers also should have knowledge of Extensible Markup Language (XML)[3] and XPath[4] syntax. Additionally, readers should have an understanding of terminologies such as SNOMED CT®, LOINC®, CPT, ICD, and RxNorm.

## **1.5. Contents of this Guide**

This guide is organized into five sections as follows:

* Section 2: Understanding C-CDA. This section contains high-level information on functional topics such as CDA Templates, CDA Schema and Schematron.
* Section 3: Guidance for Implementing Standards for Certification. This section details the C-CDA representations for the ONC 2015 Edition Common Clinical Data Set (CCDS).
* Section 4: Recommended Approaches for Meeting Certification Requirements. This section includes specific guidance and clarifications on how to implement the certification requirements including consensus recommendations for implementations.
* Section 5: Resources. This section is a catalog of all example instances (snippets) that have been included in this guide as well as additional examples.

[1] For additional information on Health Level 7 and associated standards work, visit<http://www.hl7.org/>.

[2] For access the Health Level Seven (HL7)[2] Implementation Guide for CDA Release 2: Integrating Health Enterprise (IHE) Health Story Consolidation, Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU) Release 1.1 - US Realm, July 2012, visit Structured Documents Workgroup,<http://www.hl7.org/Special/committees/structure/index.cfm>.

[3] For additional information on Extensible Markup Language, visit<http://www.w3.org/TR/xml/>.

[4] For additional information on XPath syntax, visit<http://www.w3.org/TR/xpath/>.