

November 7, 1996

Edward Hammond, Ph.D.  
Chair, HL7 Executive Committee Professor - Medical Informatics  
Duke University Medical Center  
2100 Erwin Road, Pickens Bldg., Room 06  
Durham, NC 27710

Dear Dr. Hammond:

OMG's CORBAmed Domain Task Force was formed in January, 1996 to develop voluntary, nonproprietary specifications for object interfaces in the healthcare domain. Where widely implemented data interchange standards already exist in the healthcare domain, it is the desire of CORBAmed to coordinate with the responsible standards developing organization. CORBAmed recognizes that the HL7 Standards Committee is a leading standards developer for the healthcare area. To ensure close coordination of our organizations, CORBAmed would like to initiate a formal liaison relationship with HL7.

Attached to this letter is a draft liaison proposal, structured according to the template used by the Object Management Group (OMG) for liaison agreements. We propose that this draft be reviewed (and edited as necessary) and that the liaison agreement would take effect upon approval of a final draft by HL7 and the OMG. The next OMG meeting is in January 1997 at which time an acceptable liaison template draft could be recommended to the OMG Board of Directors by vote of the OMG Liaison Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

Tim Brinson  
OMG CORBAmedco-chair

C. Peter Waegemann  
OMG CORBAmedco-chair

## **OMG LIAISON PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

To be filled in for each organization which is a candidate for a formal Liaison Statement to be generated through the Liaison Subcommittee and ratified by the OMG AB and BOD.

### **Organization Contact Information – Organization Name, Central Office address, telephone, email, and web site:**

Health Level Seven  
3300 Washtenaw Avenue, Suite 227  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-4250

phone: 313-677-7777  
fax: 313-677-6622  
email: hq@hl7.org  
web: <http://dumccss.mc.duke.edu/ftp/standards.html>

### **Primary Contact within the Organization -- Chair or secretariat's name, address, telephone, and email:**

To be filled out by HL7

### **Liaison Champion within OMG -- OMG Member company representative sponsoring this liaison:**

Karen Keeter , RN  
Senior Advisor  
IBM WW Healthcare Industry  
3200 Windy Hill Road  
Mail Drop WG14A05  
Atlanta, GA 30339  
U.S.A.  
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Email: kkeeter@vnet.ibm.com

### **Introduction: Concise statement of the proposed relationship between the organization and the OMG.**

Currently, HL7 standardizes message formats and content communicated among healthcare computing systems. The proposed relationship between HL7 and OMG will allow these two organizations to coordinate their related and overlapping efforts.

### **1 What does the organization do? To what OMG processes is the organization's work related and why?**

The HL7 Standards Committee is the developer of the HL7 Standard which represents healthcare related transactions as standardized messages. While messages may be passed as the result of an HL7 “event”, the messages themselves are EDI-like, containing standardized information but not invoking specific methods at the target. SIGOBT, a special interest group of HL7, is mapping HL7 messages to OMG IDL and will submit their result to HL7 for standardization. This work relates closely to that of OMGGORBAMED Domain Task Force.

### **2a What is the benefit to OMG of liaison with the organization?**

Liaison will foster compatibility and use of OMG CORBA Med specifications in HL7 standards systems and expedite the implementation of CORBA Med in HL7-compliant parts of the healthcare industry.

**2b What is the benefit to the organization of liaison with OMG?**

The OMG provides a non-proprietary specification for an object request broker (ORB), an object management architecture (OMA), services, and facilities. The Special Interest Group for Object Brokering Technologies (SIGOBT) is a group within HL7 that is defining a mapping of standard HL7 messages to OMG IDL. This group, in particular, will benefit from a close relationship with OMG.

**3a How should the organization act as a requirements source for OMG?**

The HL7 Standard would be a reference document in RFP's issued by the CORBA Med DTF. HL7 could suggest specific input to RFP's and input to the evaluation of RFP's by CORBA Med via their liaison representative or members in common.

**3b How should OMG act as a requirements source for the organization?**

The OMG CORBA (Common Object Request Broker Architecture) specification is currently used as a reference document for the work being done by the HL7 SIGOBT.

**4 How and when should OMG adopted specifications be introduced into the organization?**

As discussed above, the CORBA 2.1 specification has already been used by HL7. Specific healthcare-related OMG specifications can be added as they are adopted.

**5, 6, and 7 concern divergence from OMG specifications:**

**5 How should OMG best minimize divergence from OMG specifications arising during the organization's adoption process?**

Our two organizations should work closely together to assure that specifications do not diverge or conflict.

**6 How should OMG handle divergence from OMG specifications in the organization's newly-adopted product?**

We will use the liaison relationship to address any such issues as they arise.

**7 What role should OMG play in the organization's amendment and interpretation processes after OMG specifications have been adopted by the organization?**

OMG will provide active technical input to HL7 via formal liaison.

**8 Who will provide conformance testing?**

Currently HL7 does not specify or provide any aspect of conformance testing. Possibly OMG could provide testing of HL7/CORBA Med-compliant products as part of its own compliance testing program.