



IHE® Users' Quick Reference Guide

What is Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise?

Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) is a global non-for-profit organization founded in 1997 by HIMSS and RSNA. IHE enables collaboration between healthcare providers and industry leaders to improve *interoperability and exchange of health information*. The organization is based on a cooperative partnership of 650 member organizations that contribute industry experts and thought leadership for participation in IHE's committees. Together they have built a proven framework for standards-based interoperability that is adopted and implemented worldwide.

What other benefits does IHE provide?

- Systems built in on IHE enable interoperability and allow clinician access to data at the right time and right place to improve patient care
- Ensures the integrity of health information and enhances patient safety
- IHE allows clinicians to focus on the patient by reducing time spent on data integration challenges
- Delivers care providers with comprehensive patient information to make informed healthcare decisions
- IHE's Technical Frameworks are available for free in the public domain, accessible from IHE's website

What is an IHE Integration Profile?

An IHE Integration Profile describes a clinical requirement and solution for systems integration. It defines functional components, called *IHE Actors*, by specifying the transactions each Actor must perform based on widely accepted standards such as DICOM, CDISC and HL7. This detailed information is leveraged by IT professionals and healthcare organizations to enable interoperability. IHE has developed over 150 IHE Profiles, or interoperability building blocks, which are contained in its free Technical Frameworks. www.ihe.net/technical_frameworks

What is the business case for implementing IHE Integration Profiles?

- IHE Profiles enable organizations to efficiently manage health data required to support effective healthcare. The alternative—building site-specific interfaces—is more expensive and requires heavy maintenance.
- Integration built on IHE does not require a large start-up cost and makes future acquisitions easier to execute.
- IHE systems are more productive in delivering valuable functionality for end users.
- IHE Profiles provide clear definitions, based on widely accepted standards that enable interoperability.

How do you obtain IHE Integration Profiles?

Organizations can require IHE capabilities when purchasing health IT systems by listing the IHE Profiles and IHE Actors in your Request for Proposal (RFP). You can also specify a requirement for IHE certified systems.

How do I select IHE Integration Profiles?

Specifying integration requirements for the systems you are purchasing is a simple matter of selecting the IHE Profiles and IHE Actors you want supported. Note that some IHE Profiles include options that provide additional functionality that you may also decide to select.

How do I know if a vendor has IHE capabilities in their products?

The IHE Product Registry provides essential information for IT administrators and executives responsible for purchasing health IT systems. The registry is populated with over 625 IHE Integration Profiles published by vendors that declare their products are in conformance with IHE Profiles. [www.ihe.net/IHE Product Registry](http://www.ihe.net/IHE_Product_Registry)

Does IHE offer certification for health IT systems?

IHE USA* has launched an IHE Certification Program in collaboration with ICSA Labs. IHE Certification brings new technology to market that enable providers to meet today's requirements for clinical integration.

Purchasers that invest in IHE certified products can buy with confidence. All IHE certified products are tested by an independent, third-party lab to ensure there is a credible, repeatable process to deliver quality, and products will exhibit robust capabilities for optimal health data exchange and security. The certification program started in 2013 and now includes over eight (8) certified vendor products. www.iheusa.org/certification

*IHE USA is a national deployment committee of IHE International that supports the adoption and implementation of IHE Integration Profiles in the U.S. Learn more at iheusa.org.

What do IHE Integration Profiles cost?

In most cases IHE Integration Profiles cost nothing—they are integral to a product's capabilities. However, some vendors may package IHE Profiles at an added cost with new systems or offer them as an upgrade to installed systems. IHE Profiles represent a small fraction of the total cost of most systems, and more cost effective than building custom interfaces.

Where can I see IHE capabilities demonstrated?

IHE Profiles are demonstrated at HIMSS Interoperability Showcase™ events at conferences across the globe. Interoperability Showcases are unique events where healthcare stakeholders come together to demonstrate the benefits of using standards-based interoperable health IT solutions for effective and secure health information exchange. www.interoperabilityshowcase.org

What other resources are available to help me?

IHE provides tools, resources and educational programs to help users implement health IT systems that interoperate effectively in real-world care settings. Find a full listing of resources at www.ihe.net/users.

- IHE Product Registry
- User Handbooks
- IHE Integration Profiles
- Testing and Implementation Tools
- Implementation Case Studies
- Educational Events

What should I do next?

Learn about the IHE Profiles available and consider how they meet your organization's goals. Learn how to require these capabilities in an RFP and how to implement them in your setting. These resources and more are available at www.ihe.net.

Learn More About IHE.

Please visit our website at www.ihe.net