

National Product Catalogue INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Background

NEHTA Limited is a not-for-profit company established by the Australian, State and Territory governments to develop better ways of electronically collecting and securely exchanging health information.

NEHTA is also investigating the following as enablers of greater efficiency in the public health system:

- A National Product Catalogue across all procurement categories;
- An e-procurement hub to facilitate relevant data transfer between public health buying agencies and suppliers; and
- Business intelligence tools to further enhance analysis and reporting.

On 8 December 2005, the NEHTA Board, consisting of the heads of all Australian health departments, approved the development and implementation of a National Product Catalogue (NPC) on EANnet, hosted by GS1 Australia.

The National Product Catalogue

NEHTA's Board endorsed the NPC as the source of procurement data for pharmaceutical products, medical devices and other items purchased by public health institutions in all States and Territories, establishing a central repository of uniquely identified procurement data according to established international accepted standards.

The NPC will:

- enable suppliers to maintain a single suite of standards for all health jurisdictions;
- provide a cost effective way of maintaining current and accurate supply information, realising potentially significant cost savings for jurisdictions; and
- provide standardised information and unique identifiers for products procured in the health sector.

ACOM and populating the NPC

The launch of the Australian Catalogue of Medicines (ACOM) early in 2006 provides an excellent opportunity to fast track the development of the NPC for the following reasons:

- It offers a reduced administrative burden to pharmaceutical suppliers – once-off information provision and updates only as required; and

- By leveraging off ACOM, suppliers would only have to add supply chain (e.g. pricing) information to the EANnet catalogue to make it procurement ready.

NEHTA is looking at ways to source data in order to preload ACOM with pharmaceutical products, and EANnet with medical devices. Suppliers will then merely need to check the accuracy of their data and apply the GTIN to their products. For procurement purposes, pricing information also needs to be added.

HIBC and other standards

Suppliers using other numbering standards (e.g. HIBC) need not renumber or relabel their products with the GTIN information. Modern day barcode scanners can interpret all major accepted standards. EANnet also provides the capability to cross-reference other standards / numbers.

The NPC is a central content aggregator of procurement data, and does not purport to replace any other standards currently in use.

Aligning with current projects

The NPC aligns with current State projects such as the NSW Health e-marketplace whereby medical device suppliers are already populating EANnet with their product data for procurement purposes.

Hosting of the NPC

The NPC will be hosted by GS1 Australia on EANnet, built on EAN•UCC numbering standards, and primarily classifying products according to the UNSPSC classification standard.

Implementation strategy

The implementation strategy and rollout plan will be finalised towards the end of January 2006, with implementation commencing in March 2006. NEHTA envisages an uptake of the NPC within 12 – 18 months.

Further Information

For further information on the National Product Catalogue, please contact:

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