



National Standards Authority of Ireland

IRISH STANDARD

ENV 1613: 1995

ICS 11.020
11.100
35.240.70

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**MEDICAL INFORMATICS - MESSAGES FOR
EXCHANGE OF LABORATORY
INFORMATION**

*This Irish Standard was
published under the
authority of the National
Standards Authority of
Ireland
and comes into effect on:
June 30, 1998*

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Údarás um Chaighdeán Náisiúnta na hÉireann

EUROPEAN PRESTANDARD

ENV 1613

PRÉNORME EUROPÉENNE

EUROPÄISCHE VORNORM

July 1995

ICS 11.100; 35.240.60

Descriptors: medicine, data processing, information interchange, messages, laboratories, specifications

English version

Medical informatics - Messages for exchange of laboratory information

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CEN

European Committee for Standardization
Comité Européen de Normalisation
Europäisches Komitee für Normung

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Foreword

This European Prestandard has been prepared by the Technical Committee CEN/TC 251 "Electrically propelled road vehicles" of which the secretariat is held by AFNOR.

According to the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, the following countries are bound to announce this European Standard:

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

The increased use of data processing and telecommunications capabilities has made possible the interchange of information in machine readable and machine processable formats. As automated interchange of information in healthcare increases, it is essential to provide appropriate information interchange standards.

Computer systems are in use for the storage and processing of information in many clinical laboratories. Similarly many of the requesters of investigations or recipients of reports use computer systems to store and process information. This information includes details of investigations requested and results received. Clinical laboratories carry out investigations requested by healthcare parties and send the results of these investigations to the requester and sometimes to other healthcare parties.

Electronic transfer of requests and results reduces the need for manual data entry and the risk of transcription errors. It also results in greater efficiency leading to better healthcare provision. Standards are required to facilitate electronic transfer of requests for and results of investigations between the many systems currently used.

Implementation of this European Prestandard will therefore :

- a) facilitate the electronic transfer of orders for laboratory investigations from requesting healthcare parties, to clinical laboratories;
- b) facilitate the electronic transfer of reports from clinical laboratories to requesters and other healthcare parties;
- c) reduce the need for human intervention in information interchange between applications used by clinical laboratories and those used by other healthcare parties;
- d) minimise the time and effort required for the introduction of information interchange agreements;
- e) reduce the development effort required by suppliers to allow communication between a wide range of applications in this field;
- f) reduce (in consequence of the foregoing) the cost of information interchange between clinical laboratories and parties requesting clinical laboratory services.

When implementing information exchange based upon this European Prestandard data protection and secrecy principles must be guaranteed according to the laws actually in force in the different CEN member countries.

The method by which this European Prestandard has been developed is based on the recommendations of the CEN Technical Report "Investigation of Syntaxes for Existing Interchange Formats to be used in Healthcare" (CR 1350:1993).

This standard is intended for use by message developers. Its provisions are directly relevant to suppliers of computer systems for use in clinical laboratories, hospitals, general practices, clinical departments and specialist clinics. Its provisions are also relevant to those planning, specifying, procuring or implementing information systems for use in clinical laboratories, hospitals, general practices, clinical departments and specialist clinics.

The main normative provisions in this European Prestandard are expressed in clauses 4 and 5 and apply to the General Message Descriptions (GMDs), clause 7.

The symbols used in this Prestandard have the meaning as defined in normative annex A for the purposes of this Prestandard only. Informative annex B provides additional explanation to the Domain Information Model. Informative annex C gives a number of example scenarios of message use.

Annex D (informative) provides message definitions using the EDIFACT (Electronic data interchange for administration, commerce and transport) standard ISO 9735 and is in line with the procedures for submission of EDIFACT-based standards of the UNECE. These message definitions are Implementable Message Specifications conforming with this European Prestandard.

Annex D has been submitted to the UNECE and in due course is expected to achieve the status of a United Nations Standard Message (UNSM).

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