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SMART Platforms Project, Aimed at Enabling an “App Store for Health,” Names Advisory Committee

Members will guide the next phase of the project, build adoption of model supporting a flexible health IT environment

BOSTON, April 15, 2014 – The SMART (Substitutable Medical Apps & Reusable Technology) Platforms project at [Boston Children's Hospital](#)—which is developing technology to create an app-driven health information economy—announced today the formation of an advisory committee that will guide the project on strategy, technical approach and business development.

The advisory committee brings together representatives from the private, nonprofit, and government sectors with the expertise and strategic vision to help develop and advance the SMART platform. Committee members represent a wide range of organizations, including the following:

- The Advisory Board Company
- AARP
- BMJ
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- England National Health Service
- Hospital Corporation of America
- Eli Lilly and Company
- MyHealthBook
- Polyglot Systems
- Surescripts

"Each of these organizations has a strategic interest in transforming how the healthcare enterprise uses data," said [Kenneth Mandl, MD, MPH](#), of the [Boston Children's Informatics Program \(CHIP\)](#) and Harvard Medical School and chair of the SMART Platforms Advisory Committee. "Our advisory committee members will play a critical role in guiding the project toward broad adoption and use."

SMART seeks to provide a flexible information infrastructure that facilitates innovation in wellness, health care, and public health by breaking down existing barriers, providing an interface that will create a broad market for apps developers and a wide selection of apps for users of health IT. The project was born of a 2009 editorial published in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) by Mandl and Isaac Kohane, MD, PhD, also of CHIP and Harvard Medical School and co-director of the SMART project. In it, the pair called for a fundamental shift in the health IT landscape, one based on reimagining health care IT systems as iPhone-like platforms that could run substitutable apps.

“This is a signal moment in the evolution of health IT,” said Kohane. “Following the government’s \$48 billion investment to promote uptake, more than 50% of care settings now have electronic health records. But to leverage this investment and transform healthcare into a data-driven enterprise, the medical-industrial complex must freely innovate at the point of care and with patients at home, and at scale.”

The members of the advisory committee will be tasked with supporting and guiding the platform’s leadership team in extending SMART across diverse applications and ensuring its widespread availability.

“The SMART approach is a breath of fresh air to the world of health care IT, which has been historically slow to innovate,” said Clayton Christensen, architect and the world’s foremost expert on disruptive innovation, and member of the SMART advisory committee. “The time is right to ignite the effort and accelerate the creation of a robust market for app developers that will benefit the health care system and the patients it serves.”

“Forty-five per cent of U.S. adults are living with a chronic condition and, of those, 8 in 10 are tracking their own health data, but mostly offline,” said Susannah Fox, authority on the intersection of technology and health care, and SMART advisory committee member. “What if we could give them better tools and welcome them as partners in the pursuit of health? That’s the promise of the SMART Platforms project.”

Harvard Medical School received funding for the research and development of the SMART platform in 2010 from the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) as part of the Strategic Healthcare IT Advanced Research Projects (SHARP) program. This program supports innovative research to address well-documented problems that impede the adoption of health IT.

“We have demonstrated that developers can write a SMART-enabled healthcare app once and run it virtually anywhere,” said Josh Mandel, MD, the lead architect of SMART, referring to a recent showcase at the annual HIMMS (Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society) conference in Orlando where SMART apps were shown running on multiple EHR systems.

Additionally, the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute recently awarded Harvard Medical School and Boston Children’s a \$7 million grant to build a 10-site clinical research network called “Scalable Collaborative Infrastructure for a Learning Healthcare System,” which will rely on SMART apps.

To learn more about SMART, visit <https://smartplatforms.org>.

[Boston Children’s Hospital](#) is home to the world’s largest research enterprise based at a pediatric medical center, where its discoveries have benefited both children and adults since 1869. More than 1,100 scientists, including seven members of the National Academy of Sciences, 14 members of the Institute of Medicine and 14 members of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute comprise Boston Children’s research community. Founded as a 20-bed hospital for children, Boston Children’s today is a 395-bed comprehensive center for pediatric and adolescent health care. Boston Children’s is also the primary pediatric teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. For more information about research and clinical innovation at Boston Children’s, visit: <http://vectorblog.org>.