One of the primary goals of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 is to promote the adoption of interoperable electronic health records (EHRs) and subsequently develop a national health information network to securely exchange data. MEDITECH customers are well positioned to achieve the sophisticated electronic exchange of information called for in the ARRA, including:

- Sharing and exchanging clinical information among care providers (problems, medications, allergies, and test results)
- Prescribing medications electronically and reconciling medications among care settings
- Sharing electronic care summaries
- Participating in regional health networks
- Communicating with public health agencies.

This document outlines the MEDITECH integration and interoperability solutions available to help you meet these ARRA requirements.

Sharing and Exchanging Key Clinical Information
Our fully integrated Practice Management solution (co-developed with LSS Data Systems) enables seamless integration of data between hospitals and physician practices. Care providers share critical care information such as allergies, medications, and medical problems easily, for the ultimate coordination of patient data.

Providing Services to Physicians
Physician offices using Practice Management systems other than the MEDITECH/LSS solution can exchange data using a variety of interoperable solutions offered by MEDITECH. One of these solutions, specifically designed to address "one-to-many" interface scenarios, is offered by MEDITECH and the Forward Advantage corporation. Designed for rapid deployment and easy maintenance, Data Express is an interface suite which communicates HL7 results output from MEDITECH's Laboratory, Imaging and Therapeutic Services, and Departmental solutions to physician practices in multiple formats, via a variety of transport formats. Building on our success with results reporting, MEDITECH and Forward Advantage now offer a streamlined process for communicating orders from physician practices to hospitals as well.

e-Prescribing and Medication Reconciliation
MEDITECH offers medication reconciliation at each transition among healthcare settings. Clinicians can review a list of medications a patient is currently taking when the patient enters the hospital. They can also check the patient's medication claims history, and select additional medication to add to the list of reported home medications, ensuring a complete list. Once the patient is admitted, providers can again review ambulatory medications, including those dispensed in the Emergency Department and select which ones to convert to inpatient medications. Likewise, when a patient is discharged, the physician can select which inpatient medications and original ambulatory prescriptions to convert to a new set of ambulatory prescriptions.

To carry forward the benefits of electronic prescribing to the outpatient setting, MEDITECH has integrated industry-leading e-Prescribing technology into our comprehensive medication management solution. This functionality drives our clinical excellence and enhances patient safety by adding the ability to electronically transmit prescriptions to an outpatient pharmacy upon discharge and providing access to a patient's medication claim history during medication reconciliation.

e-Prescribing capabilities further allow organizations to electronically query a patient's prescription drug plan and formulary to determine eligibility, covered medications, and benefit tiers. If a medication is not covered, then the system will list preferred drug alternatives. Physician offices using the medication management solution will also benefit from an electronic refill notification on the Physician's Desktop screen.
Continuity of Care Documents (CCDs)
MEDITECH was the first vendor to successfully support a project utilizing Continuity of Care Documents (CCDs) when it piloted a project connecting a Massachusetts community hospital with five community medical groups. Participants in this project exchange care summaries, based on industry-standard protocols. The ability to exchange CCDs is inherent within our 6.0 and 5.6 applications.

Health Information Exchanges (HIEs)
MEDITECH supports both centralized and decentralized clinical data sharing models. In a centralized model, the data sharing and exchange of electronic information among participants is conducted through a centralized data repository. All providers or institutions send their data to a central repository on a periodic basis (i.e. daily) and view information as needed through external portals, or other forms of data delivery, such as importing data (e.g. medical summaries) back into the Electronic Medical Record (EMR).

In a decentralized or federated model of health information exchange, data remains at the point of service and is only exchanged when requested, such as when the patient presents for care and is registered in the facility providing the care. Utilizing industry standards, these independent databases can reference where external data lives via a Record Locator Service (RLS) or a Client Registry (CR) to coordinate patient identification and the location of patient information.

The decentralized model uses emerging Health Information Technology Standards Panel (HTSP) standards for exchanging information between acute care hospitals using MEDITECH’s EHR and physician practices. These standards include the HL7 Clinical Document Architecture (CDA) and the Care Record Summary (CRS)/CCD for defining message content.

Communicating with Public Health Agencies
MEDITECH is involved in several initiatives to help customers automate biosurveillance and public health reporting. We will continue to participate and assist in defining the standards needed for more advanced automated reporting in this area. The MEDITECH Emergency Department Management (EDM) and inpatient applications already yield data that supports our nation’s surveillance efforts. Our Public Health and Biosurveillance solutions extend these capabilities with ADT interfaces to send real-time or batch disease and diagnosis information to public health agencies.

Be Prepared
MEDITECH wants you to be better prepared to interoperate with the organizations in your region and report quality and data nationally, as constituted by ARRA. Since data sharing implementations are highly individualized, MEDITECH works with each customer to fully understand your needs and tailor interoperability interface suites accordingly. The process begins with a thorough analysis and understanding of each customer’s goals and objectives. Please contact your MEDITECH sales representative if you would like to learn more.