
Public Health Informatics Research Grid

Collaboration Code of Conduct

Version 1.0

7/02/2008

Purpose

Due to the highly collaborative nature of CDC's NCPHI (National Center for Public Health Informatics) – sponsored public health informatics research grid proof of concept projects, it is necessary to have a code of conduct that govern all collaborative materials posted to project related sites and made available through the internet by the general public. As part of testing open source development methodologies the grid related projects are required to collaborate with NCPHI public health partners. In order to allow maximum collaboration by self-selecting public health partners, all activities possible are transparent and accessible by interested parties of the general public.

The content and software generated by the grid related projects is research-oriented and not intended for production systems or applications. It is used for exploration, testing and staging. Should the findings be useful, it will be transferred to NCPHI programs that may use it within their own development life cycle constructs.

NCPHI is developing a center wide policy and infrastructure for collaboration that will address the needs of the grid related projects. At such time as that policy and infrastructure is approved and made available, this policy shall be superseded and project infrastructure will be migrated to NCPHI collaboration infrastructure.

Background

CDC Scientific Clearance is the process of obtaining approvals by appropriate CDC officials before a CDC information product is released to the public or CDC's external public health partners.

Information products that require formal clearance include print, electronic, or oral materials, that CDC employees author or coauthor, whether published by CDC or outside CDC. CDC contractors developing content on behalf of CDC for the public or CDC's external public health partners are also required to put their content through the formal clearance process.

The collaborative functions related to the grid projects include blogs, wikis, forums, bug tracking sites, source control and others as deemed necessary by the project team.

In order to abide by the NCPHI "Information Products Clearance Policy and Guidance" (available at http://intranet.cdc.gov/ncphi/science/pdfs/NCPHI_Clearance_Policy_May2006.pdf), CDC "Clearance of Information Products Disseminated Outside CDC for Public Use" (available at <http://intraspn.cdc.gov/maso/policy/Doc/policy66.htm>), and HHS "Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated by HHS Agencies" (available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/infoquality>); all collaborative materials will be controlled by the rules contained within this document. This will allow for the real-time collaboration opportunities among CDC employees, CDC contractors and CDC public health partners.

This document has been cleared, and all collaborative material posted to project related sites will be controlled by the policies contained within this document.

Code of Conduct

All contributions made to grid related internet accessible collaboration sites must meet the set of rules detailed below. Grid related collaboration sites are monitored and mediated by CDC employees and CDC contractors. Any infraction to the rules will be addressed in a timely manner and can result in the infracting material removed from project related sites. Infractions should be reported to the project lead as soon as identified.

Ground Rules

- Members will act with integrity and adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional ethics. As collaborations tend to be self-correcting, active participation means both offering suggestions and accepting them with a focus on product improvement. Personal attacks, hidden destructive code or other forms of harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. Collaboration is highly encouraged, and although this may not always be positive, it should always be respectful and constructive.
- Only authorized committers are allowed to make changes to project related sites. Project leads determine authorized committers and assign permissions.
- Any sites not hosted by CDC or CDC resources should use separate authorization so as not to compromise existing CDC authentication and authorization procedures. This means that committers should not use an ID/ user name or password currently in use as their CDC ID / user name or password.
- No specific security related information should be shared. No information that would allow an unauthorized party to compromise CDC systems security shall be posted. This includes, but is not limited to: user names, user ids, passwords, IP addresses, private certificate information, specific system configuration.
- No restricted or privileged information should be posted that is limited in distribution rights. For example, there are US export controls for encryption routines and algorithms that cannot be shared with specific countries.
- No content in violation of US or international copyright shall be posted without explicit, written consent of the copyright holder.
- All content in draft form must be clearly marked with the words “DRAFT” both within the content itself and in any specific sites referencing the content.
- No personally identifiable health data shall be posted or stored on collaboration sites. This includes partially identifiable data containing fields such as age, race, sex, geolocation. Only sample, mock or test data shall be used.
- No posting of source code or unpublished materials relating to CDC or NCPHI developed production systems and applications.