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Data Usability Takes Root Nationwide Through a Joint Project Between The Sequoia Project and AHIMA
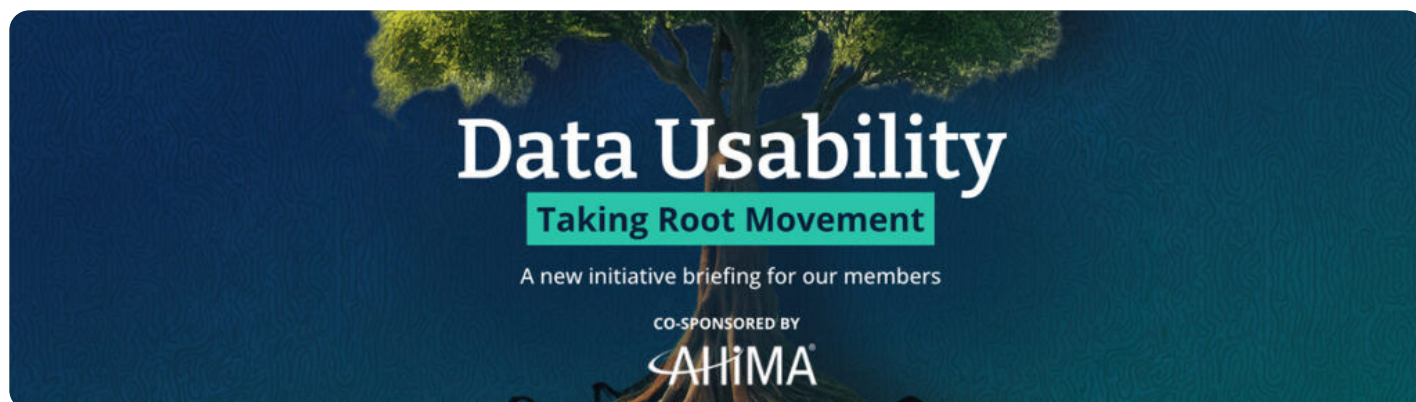
Community Advancing Health IT Interoperability Continues Branches into Implementation

(Vienna, VA – July 11, 2023) –**The Sequoia Project (https://sequoiaproject.org)**, a non-profit and trusted advocate for nationwide health information technology (health IT) interoperability, today announced the launch of a new initiative called Data Usability Taking Root to make health data more useful. Multiple health and health IT organizations have already pledged their support for The Sequoia Project's new initiative including:

- Azuba

- Civitas Networks for Health
- Epic
- Foothold Technology
- HCA
- Health Gorilla
- HIMSS Electronic Health Record Association (EHRA)
- Kno2
- MedAllies
- New York eHealth Collaborative

Taking Root participants are building a community of practice committed to implementing data usability guidance published by The Sequoia Project Interoperability Matters Data Usability Workgroup. The guidance targets improvements necessary for semantic interoperability of health information, beginning with the quality of clinical data shared between healthcare providers.

"Over three years, more than 260 health organizations worked together through The Sequoia Project to develop practical guidance to make health data more useful for healthcare providers, health IT vendors, public health, health information exchanges, and patients," said Mariann Yeager, CEO of The Sequoia Project. "It's time to put this guidance into action for the public good."

The Data Usability Taking Root initiative will improve the usability of data received by end users within their workflows by making data more computable and actionable. Participants of the new initiative will choose their implementation pathways and paces, selecting topics most meaningful to their organizations. The Sequoia Project will provide technical assistance, testing support, and facilitation of the data usability community of practice to support implementation.

A series of virtual events this summer will culminate in a Data Usability Taking Root Summit on September 6, 2023 in Washington, DC.

"Implementers choose to work on areas that matter most to them," explained Didi Davis, The Sequoia Project's vice president of informatics, conformance, and interoperability. "For some, this could mean working on data provenance and traceability of change, data integrity and trust, or data tagging and searchability. For others, it could mean effective use of codes, reducing the impact of duplicates, effective use of narrative, or any combination they choose."

Launching and growing the movement is a monumental undertaking for The Sequoia Project, made possible through a collaboration with the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). The organizations encourage implementers to adopt a data-usability-in-all-projects approach to make practical incremental improvements over time, and to stop thinking of usability as a distinct health IT project.

"Data usability is part of the DNA of the health information profession. We support this work not only because the public and private sectors together have made significant strides in health data interoperability, but because for over 96 years, AHIMA has been laser-focused on ensuring the completeness and usefulness of health data" said Amy Mosser, interim AHIMA chief executive officer. "Implementation of data usability guidance on a national scale will promote consistency across technologies that share data, at a time when more data are available and shared than ever before."

Health and health IT organizations committed to making health data more useful can now **join the Data Usability Taking Root movement (https://sequoiaproject.org/data-usability-taking-root-movement/)**. For more information, contact The Sequoia Project at **TakingRoot@sequoiaproject.org (mailto:TakingRoot@sequoiaproject.org)**.

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About The Sequoia Project
The Sequoia Project is a non-profit, 501c3, public-private collaborative chartered to advance implementation of secure, interoperable nationwide health information exchange. The Sequoia Project focuses on solving real-world interoperability challenges and brings together public and private stakeholders in forums such as the Interoperability Matters cooperative to overcome barriers. The Sequoia Project serves as the Recognized Coordinating Entity (RCE) for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT's Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA), for which it will develop, implement, and maintain the Common Agreement component of TEFCA and operationalize the Qualified Health Information Network (QHIN) designation and monitoring process. For more information about The Sequoia Project and its initiatives, visit **www.sequoiaproject.org (http://www.sequoiaproject.org/)**. Follow The Sequoia Project on Twitter: **@SequoiaProject (http://www.twitter.com/sequoiaproject)**.

About AHIMA

AHIMA is a global nonprofit association of health information (HI) professionals with more than 67,000 members and more than 100,000 credentials in the field. The AHIMA mission of empowering people to impact health drives our members and credentialed HI professionals to ensure that health information is accurate, complete, and available to patients and providers. Our leaders work at the intersection of healthcare, technology, and business and are found in data integrity and information privacy job functions worldwide.

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The Sequoia Project is the independent, trusted advocate for nationwide health information exchange. In the public interest we steward current programs, incubate new initiatives and educate our community.

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