



Program API Proposal

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Goal

Up-to-date information about educational programs of study or training is essential for the day-to-day conduct of business within many organizations. The data may be used within the credentials verification process or in creating tools that connect learners to appropriate educational programs. In addition, program data may be used in educational outcomes research. Accrediting bodies and associations frequently offer public facing access to program information, but it is typically not in a format that is easily used by computer systems. As a result, individuals responsible for verifying this data spent a great deal of time sifting through webpages that provide access to the information, then putting the information into a format that can be used by computer systems in their organization.

Some accrediting bodies and associations offer subscriptions to detailed information about education or training programs and provide that data in an electronic format. Often the data is received on an infrequent basis, preventing data users from getting real-time updates on program information changes.

Providing electronic access to program data in real time would allow this data to be used more freely in credentials verification processes and would save the organizations that use this data time and money. Restful Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) could allow for true systems integration. We propose developing APIs specifications for the integration of program data into other systems.

Context

MedBiquitous develops information technology standards for healthcare education, assessment, and improvement. Through Working Groups and a Standards Committee, MedBiquitous members are creating a technology blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment. To date, MedBiquitous has developed XML and Web Services data exchange standards to support the many activities, organizations, and resources that support the ongoing education, performance, and assessment of healthcare professionals. In 2016, The MedBiquitous Technical Steering Committee developed an API Architecture to support the development of standard APIs by MedBiquitous working groups. These APIs may be based on JSON or XML data format.

Many of the organizations involved in credentialing US physicians are using the MedBiquitous Professional Profile standard to exchange data with one another. At a May 2016 meeting of the

MedBiquitous Professional Profile Working Group, several of these credentialing organizations shared a need for a more integrated and timely approach to obtaining program data for credentials verification and learner program matching.

Standards Environment

ANSI/MEDBIQ PP.10.1-2008, Healthcare Professional Profile provides a standard XML format for profile data on healthcare professionals, making it easier to exchange and compile profile data across organizations [[Professional Profile](#)]. The data model includes a basic model for program information, which may serve as the basis for the API. The Professional Profile data model for program data is used in many other MedBiquitous standards.

The MedBiquitous Technical Steering committee has developed an API Architecture that will serve as guidance for the development of the Program Information API [[API Architecture](#)]. In addition the Open Data Standards effort provides standards for interoperability and data portability across open APIs [[Open Data](#)]. These standards may be useful in shaping our efforts as well.

Scope

We propose developing restful APIs for exposing and exchanging program information. Restful APIs will be based on XML and JSON. Whenever possible the specifications will leverage existing data models and specifications, including the Healthcare Professional Profile and Open Data.

The MedBiquitous Technical Steering Committee will offer guidance and technical support when needed. The specifications and services created by this working group may serve as foundation pieces for other specifications designed by MedBiquitous and will be architected to allow for other parts of the MedBiquitous blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment and may be submitted to ANSI as part of the ANSI-accredited standards development process.

References

API Architecture

MedBiquitous Technical Steering Committee, 2016. MedBiquitous Application Programming Interface Architecture.

Open Data

The Open Data Substrate: Community Driven Open Data Interoperability and Data Portability Standards. Accessed at: <http://open-data-standards.github.io/>

Professional Profile

Smothers, V. 2008. ANSI/MEDBIQ PP.10.1-2008, Healthcare Professional Profile. Accessed at: http://www.medbiq.org/working_groups/professional_profile/ProfessionalProfileSpecification.pdf