

Why **<prTag>**?

Many people will see this as just another patient identifier and we have too many of those already. But **<prTag>** is much more than just an identifier. It is constructed solely for healthcare with some unique features that are not available in any other identifier. Of course, it does identify the owner absolutely without error unlike the current combination of name and birthdate.

Common identifiers like a driver's license, a social security number, or a healthcare insurance number are still carried on cards in wallets and purses. That is changing as more and more we use smartphone apps and tools like Apple Wallet and Google Wallet. Most tags are easy to carry and manage, perhaps attached to a key chain. Identifiers are cumbersome, cause wallet bulge and are often difficult to locate quickly and conveniently. We want our identifier to be nimble and easy to manage and convey that by calling it a tag.

Parents often must manage the healthcare of their children and adults frequently manage the healthcare of their aging parents. We want the management of multiple identifiers to be as simple as a few tags on a key ring or entries in a smartphone app.

So, why "p" and "r".

Americans are more concerned about and protective of their health information than any other data they manage. Many see a patient identifier as an invasion of privacy even though they recognize its value for identification. The **<prTag>** approach uniquely empowers each patient to manage their personal health information by deciding who has access to it. "p" represents the special **privacy** consideration given to all health information that is associated with that tag.

We are all aware of the problems of identity theft and data breaches. Occurrences of identity theft in healthcare have been increasing dramatically. Currently, there is no reliable method to recovery fully from an identity theft or data breach in healthcare. The "r" in **<prTag>** represents **recovery** from and **repair** of all of errors and criminal actions that that may involve a patient's identification. This is an extremely important feature and a major step forward in allow medical care to resume quickly even after one of these distasteful episodes.

A patient's complete health record is distributed across many healthcare facilities they attend. Composing an accurate longitudinal health record is complicated by each facility using different identifiers and possible errors or inconsistencies in the spelling of names or the recording of birth dates. The **<prTag>** approach finally gives us a way to confidently accept data from other facilities because we can match records exactly on **<prTag>**. The "pr" of **<prTag>** illustrates that this identifier **promotes** the sharing of health information and **protects** the patient from matching errors.

Finally, a bold, italic, and crimson font with angle brackets was selected to make the identifier stand out as obviously being much more than just an identifier. The **<prTag>** has many features but none more important than accurately identifying the patient, providing the patient with ways to manage the privacy of their health records, recovering fully and quickly from identity theft and data breaches, and assisting in the reliable sharing of health information across healthcare facilities.