

Extending the coverage of phenotypes in SNOMED CT through post-coordination

Presenter: Ferdinand Dhombres^a, Rainer Winnenburger^b, James T. Case^a and Olivier Bodenreider^a
a: National Library of Medicine, USA
b: Stanford Center for Biomedical Informatics Research, Stanford University, USA

Audience

Developers and users of SNOMED CT interested in the representation of phenotypes.

Objectives

1. To learn about the coverage of phenotypes in SNOMED CT (pre-coordinated concepts);
2. To understand how logical definitions can serve as templates for new post-coordinated concepts;
3. To learn how such templates can be automatically populated for phenotypes not currently represented in SNOMED CT.

Abstract

In previous work, we demonstrated that only 30% of the 10,000 phenotypes from the Human Phenotype Ontology (HPO) were represented in SNOMED CT as pre-coordinated concepts, which is insufficient for supporting the deep phenotyping required for detailed genetic studies.

Our objective is to extend the coverage of phenotypes in SNOMED CT through post-coordination. The specific contribution of this work is to identify templates in SNOMED CT, based on the logical definitions of existing concepts, for the creation of post-coordinated expressions for phenotype concepts from HPO.

For example, based on the logical definition of “Congenital hypoplasia of kidney”, we can create a post-coordinated expression for “Congenital hypoplasia of macula” by substituting “Kidney structure” with “Macula lutea structure”. This post-coordinated expression provides a mapping for the HPO concept “Macular hypoplasia” (interpreted as being congenital in the context of HPO). Moreover, the post-coordinated expression created for “Congenital hypoplasia of macula” can be generalized to a template for the congenital hypoplasia of any anatomical structure.

We created 12 templates (e.g., “abnormality of <ANATOMICAL_STRUCTURE>”) from which we were able to derive post-coordinated expressions for 1,617 HPO concepts for which there was no equivalent pre-coordinated concept in SNOMED CT. Through this novel approach, we were able to increase the current number of mappings between HPO and SNOMED CT from 3,081 to 4,698 (+52%). Post-coordination is an efficient way of extending the coverage of phenotypes in SNOMED CT.

References

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2. Dhombres F, Winnenburger R, Case JT, Bodenreider O. Extending the coverage of phenotypes in SNOMED CT through post-coordination. Stud Health Technol Inform (Proc Medinfo) 2015:(in press). <http://mor.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/pdf/2015-medinfo-fd.pdf>