

Title: Adding SNOMED CT support to an existing clinical records system - The experience with Oncology Electronic Health Record of Uruguay

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Audience

Users, Vendors, Implementers, medical oncologists.

Objectives

To share the experience about how the clinical records system used in the Uruguay National Cancer Registry was adapted to use SNOMED CT to record diagnoses in cancer patients visits.

Abstract

Over the last decades, cancer is one of the main causes of death in Uruguay and the region. As an initiative of Servicios de Oncología at Universidad de la República, Servicios Oncológicos de la Asociación Española and Comisión Honoraria de Lucha contra el Cáncer (CHLCC), the Oncology Electronic Health Record (HCEO in its Spanish acronym) was developed through the intervention of Salud.uy Program.

The objective proposed is to design an information system that contributes to improve patient health care integrating medical information from all health care facilities which participate in the process, with independence from its geographic location or health care institution, through a comprehensive view of the patient.

The HCEO framework involves the strategic guidelines from the National Electronic Health Record (HCEN in its Spanish acronym) fulfilling its architecture and technologic standard requirements. The HCEO has a national coverage and incorporates protocols and prevention, diagnosis and treatment guidelines, worked out by the Oncology and Radiotherapy Chairs at the School of Medicine, Universidad de la República.

Moreover, HCEO's national scope in terms of target population and support to disease-related national health policies, contributes directly with the National Register of Cancer, providing substantial information resulting in the improvement of epidemiological information at a national level and the evaluation of the quality assistance. It is with this propose that it was decided to use SNOMED CT; therefore, we had to find a way to align this existing project to encode diagnoses with appropriate granularity and interoperate with other partners in order to achieve the expected goals.

The solution found consisted in the use of Clinical Terminology Services and this development will be the subject of this work.