



A Proposed XML-based Refset Distribution Format

Presenter: Julie M. Green, DVM, MS, Veterinary Terminology Services Laboratory, Va-Md Regional College of Veterinary Medicine

Audience

The intended audience for this poster is any individual or organization that wants to distribute or receive local language reference set (refset) content independent of a full RF2 release.

Objectives

To demonstrate and encourage discussion of a proposed XML format for distributing local language preference reference sets with their associated concept reference set.

Abstract

SNOMED CT RF2 provides the community with a mechanism for creating, within extensions, local language preference reference sets (refsets) that designate which descriptions are preferred or acceptable within a given domain or subject area.¹ This allows terminologists to provide end users with a customized view of the terminology that conforms to their local dialect or language preferences. These language refsets are often coupled with refsets of concepts that narrow the view even more by containing only the concepts from the terminology that apply to those specific domains or subject areas. Terminology providers that create and maintain these refsets need a way to distribute them. Distributing a full RF2 release in the standard release format is not always ideal. In many cases, clients only need or want to receive the content contained within specific reference sets.

Recognizing the need to distribute subsets independent of a full release of SNOMED CT, IHTSDO had begun development, prior to RF2, of an XML based Interchange Format which provided for the distribution of subsets as implemented in RF1.² The terminologists at the Veterinary Terminology Services Laboratory (VTSL), at the Va-Md Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, Virginia Tech, had begun to implement this Interchange Format in order to distribute subsets to their clients who requested an XML distribution format. The advent of RF2 expanded the role of subsets into refsets that included that of language preferences among others. With this change in the format and function of refsets, the Interchange Format is no longer adequate for its purposes. The terminologists at the VTSL have proposed an XML format for distributing local language preference refsets along with the simple concept refsets with which they are associated. The format includes the ability to distribute both full (all concepts and language preferences) and delta (only concepts and preferences that have been added, changed or retired within a given time period) versions. The proposed format is in beta release for two refsets of findings and diagnoses commonly used in general small animal and equine practices maintained by VTSL. These refsets were previously released by VTSL using the draft specification of the SNOMED CT Interchange Format, version 0.03. The proposed release format is currently under review by VTSL's clients and their end-users.

References

1. SNOMED CT Technical Implementation Guide,
http://www.ihtsdo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/doc/en_us/tig.html.
2. SNOMED CT Interchange Format, Draft Specification, Version 0.03. Markwell, D. IHTSDO, 2007-11-30.