INTERNATIONAL HEALTH TERMINOLOGY
STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

Using SNOMED CT in an International Clinical Information System

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Audience

The audience for this presentation includes clinicians involved with terminologies and clinical information systems, clinical information system designers, and SNOMED CT experts.

Objectives

Describe the benefits of using SNOMED CT within an international clinical information system.

Describe how SNOMED CT can be incorporated into an international clinical information system.

Describe the challenges of using SNOMED CT in an international clinical information system.

Abstract

This presentation will share the experiences of using SNOMED CT within an international critical care information system.   This information system is currently installed in over 20 countries and is localized in over 12 languages.   SNOMED CT has been used in the system for more than eight years.   SNOMED CT was selected as the reference terminology for the system for many reasons.   Some of these reasons include the international adoption of the terminology, the multi-disciplinary clinical approach, and the quality of the terminology. This presentation will further describe the motivation to have a reference terminology, the investigation into reference terminologies, other reasons for selecting SNOMED CT, and the challenges of licensing and implementation.

Every data dictionary element in the information system is mapped to a SNOMED CT concept including drugs, results, and interventions.   System configuration tools allow the user, often clinicians, to search through the SNOMED CT concepts and assign them to data dictionary items. Further descriptions of these tools with screen shots will be presented.   SNOMED CT is used for inbound and outbound HL7 messages. It is also used to tag the data stored in the system's data access repository used for data analysis.   The use of SNOMED CT in these two situations and others will be described in further detail. SNOMED CT concepts are updated with every product release to the latest version of the terminology using a consistent process. Some of the challenges of using SNOMED CT are in addressing some of the clinical gaps in the terminology and the focus of country specific versions. SNOMED CT is an important part of the product architecture and framework. It is expected that future system features will take greater advantage of SNOMED CT. This presentation will be vendor and product neutral.