7.3 Clinical Research

Clinical research is a branch of healthcare science that determines the safety and effectiveness of medications, devices, diagnostic products, and treatment regimens intended for human use. Clinical research may be used for the prevention, treatment, diagnosis or for relieving symptoms of a disease. In contrast to clinical practice, which applies established treatment regimes, clinical research collects evidence to extend knowledge and establish the value of novel treatments and other patient management practices.

Clinical research typically involves the analysis of data from well-defined and homogenous groups of patients with a specific disease, at a specific stage, receiving similar treatments and often without significant co-morbidities. The data may be captured prospectively or retrieved retrospectively.

SNOMED CT helps clinical research activities by assisting in the identification of clinical trial candidates, enabling the powerful analysis of trial data, supporting predictive medicine, and improving the effectiveness of semantic search over clinical knowledge.

In this section, we discuss three key aspects to clinical research that can benefit from the use of SNOMED CT: identification of clinical trial candidates, predictive medicine, and semantic search.