IHTSDO Deprecation Process

Date 20150522
Version 2.0
Status: Approved

Amendment History

Version	Date	Editor	Comments
0.01	20120713	Julie Richards	
0.02	20120724	Julie Richards	Updates from 20120724 conference call
0.03	20120730	Julie Richards	Incorporate Jane Millar's comments
0.04	20120801	Julie Richards	Clean up and grammar corrections
0.05	20120810	Jane Millar	Minor updates
0.06	20130924	Julie Richards	Major updates after consultation review 1
0.07	20130928	Julie Richards	Minor updates incorporating Jeremy Thorp and Jane Millar's comments
0.08	20131009	Julie Richards	Updates incorporating feedback from Quality Assurance Committee.
0.09	20140421	Julie Richards	First version after Review 2 incorporating comments received.
0.10	20140429	Julie Richards	Version approved by QAC for recommendation to the Management Board.
1.0	20140819	Julie Richards	Final version after review by MB and approval by CEO.
1.01	20150511	Juliet Gole Krarup	Revised
1.02	20150518	JGK	Incorporating feedback from Robert Turnbull

Approvals

Version	Date	Approver	Comments
1.0	20140730	Don Sweete, CEO	
2.0	20150522	Don Sweete, CEO	

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1 Overview

Introduction

In the creation, implementation and maintenance of health solutions, changes occur over time, and thus there is a need for formal deprecation processes. Changes are driven by many factors, including changes in the business of health and enhancements in technology. They can occur across all types of artifacts, including SNOMED CT itself, SNOMED CT format type, mappings to other terminologies, reference sets, as well as IHTSDO-approved documentation and standards. It is common practice that the level of service support provided decreases and/or stops once an artifact has been deprecated.

IHTSDO must understand the impact that deprecation of any given artifact would have on stakeholders, particularly the Members, which own IHTSDO and SNOMED CT. It is also important that the user community have the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the deprecation plan and when and for how long support would, according to the plan, be provided.
This IHTSDO Deprecation Process has been developed to ensure that the IHTSDO Deprecation Policy is followed in a consistent way and that the user community knows how and when it can provide input.

This document is accompanied by two additional deprecation documents: one that describes the policy for deprecation and one that facilitates the consultation and approval processes during the deprecation process:
- IHTSDO Deprecation Policy
- IHTSDO Deprecation Template

This process describes how to make a *decision* to deprecate a product. That decision is a step on the way to retiring a product from the IHTSDO catalog and withdrawing it from the market. The decision is based partly on how the "withdrawal" plan is received by the Member/CoP corpus. This Deprecation Document, which is based on the Deprecation Template, describes the withdrawal plan, and that plan and the Deprecation Document itself get revised as the process proceeds and more individuals, including Member representatives and members of the Community of Practice, provide input.

Please note that the Deprecation Process is not the same as the process for invalidating a concept, which might happen when a safety issue occurs. Refer to the IHTSDO Glossary for the definition and process for an Inactive Component, Inactive Concept and Inactive Description and the IHTSDO website for information on how to request a change to SNOMED CT.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide step-by-step instructions on how IHTSDO runs its Deprecation Process.

Audience

This document will be of interest to anyone who is interested in knowing how IHTSDO artifacts are deprecated, including:

- IHTSDO Members
- IHTSDO employees
- National Release Centers
- Affiliates, including vendors and systems integrators
- Other users

2 Deprecation Process - Stages and Steps

The process for deprecation needs to be in line with the size, impact, complexity and specific reasons for deprecation. For example, deprecation due to a safety issue will need to be dealt with quickly. On the other extreme, moving from one release format to another requires a detailed review of the impacts and requires a more comprehensive consultation with users. Therefore, the IHTSDO Deprecation Process defines both a longer, more detailed *Regular Deprecation Process* and a quicker *Fast-Track Deprecation Process*.

The determination of whether to reject a proposal for deprecation or to proceed with either the Fast-Track or Regular Deprecation process is guided by a set of criteria, partly based on IHTSDO's Risk and Issue Management Policy and Critical Incidents Policy.

The following process is based on IHTSDO internal sources initiating the deprecation process. If the initiation comes from an external source, then minor modifications will be necessary.

3 Stage 1 – Initiation of Deprecation

Step 1: Initial discussions

Staff members and the CEO decide that the artifact might need to be deprecated. Initial consultations occur with stakeholders.

Step 2: CEO selects a staff lead; the staff lead selects support staff

Step 3: The staff lead drafts the Deprecation Document using the Deprecation Template

This step may include consultations with relevant IHTSDO Advisory or Project groups, Members, vendors, and any other known stakeholders.

The document will evolve as additional information is gathered and recorded at each stage.

Step 4: The staff lead shares the Deprecation Document with the rest of the Management Team and solicits input

4 Stage 2 – Review of Proposal for Deprecation

Step 5: CEO sign-off to proceed

The CEO reviews and approves the Deprecation Document.

Step 6: MB sign-off to proceed

The staff lead drafts briefing papers for the Management Board to:

1. Introduce the deprecation document;
2. Recommend approving it so that the external consultation stage can begin;
3. Decide whether a Regular or Fast-Track Deprecation Process should be employed; and
4. Recommend that the final approver be either the MB or the General Assembly.

The MB reviews and comments on the Deprecation Document and decides on the issues listed above. Decisions are properly minuted.

In the event of the MB serving as the final approver, the GA should still be informed of the process. Note that, as the owner of SNOMED CT and IHTSDO, the General Assembly has the duty and responsibility to approve all decisions that have a major impact on the organization and its products. The MB Chair may inform the GA via the regular GA Chair/MB Chair teleconferences.

Generally any proposal for deprecation that requires GA approval has a significant enough impact that it should go through the Regular Deprecation Process and receive full consultation unless there are significant reasons to use the Fast-Track process and possibly hold a GA electronic vote.

If there is a safety issue, it may be necessary to address the issue immediately according to the Critical Incidents Policy and, at the same time, complete the Fast-Track Deprecation Process. This will ensure that proper documentation and communication take place. Regardless of the nature of the safety issue, notification takes place immediately so that all possible users of the relevant artifact can judge for themselves whether to act sooner rather than later to mitigate the safety risk.

5 Stage 3 – Deprecation Consultation

Step 7: Announcement that deprecation consultation will commence

Immediately after MB sign-off on the Deprecation Document, an announcement is made to the Community of Practice that the consultation stage will begin in 30 days (or more). The announcement includes the name and scope of the artifact, the reason for deprecation, the start and end date of the deprecation consultation, and the process for submitting comments.

The announcement must take place at least 30 days prior to Step 8.

Step 8: Consultation

Deprecation consultation allows users of the artifact to understand the reason for deprecation, determine the impact on them and their stakeholders, and provide feedback.

The Deprecation Document is distributed to IHTSDO Members, Affiliates, the Member Forum, relevant Advisory Groups or other groups, and others via the website or collaboration platform. Stakeholders read the Deprecation Document and then submit feedback through a Google form or other appropriate means to collect and collate information.

Deprecation consultation for the Regular Deprecation Process is two to three months. Deprecation Consultation for the Fast-Track Deprecation Process is no longer than two weeks.

6 Stage 4 – Deprecation Decision

Step 9: Analysis of the data

The staff lead analyzes the data from the deprecation consultation and writes up the conclusions, recommendations, and plan for deprecation for presentation to the CEO, MB, and potentially GA. The documentation might include:

1. The Deprecation Document, which may have been modified based on input received;
2. Slide deck analyzing the feedback from the deprecation consultation; and
3. Briefing papers for formal MB and possibly GA decisions on the staff lead's recommendations.

Step 10: CEO sign-off on decision and plan

CEO reviews the documents and signs off on proceeding.

Step 11: MB sign-off on or approval of decision and plan

The MB reviews the documents and signs off on or approves the decision and plan. The decision is properly minuted. The CEO and MB Chair decide on whether the minutes of that decision should be made public.

Step 12: GA approval of decision and plan, or GA is informed of MB decision

If it had been determined in Step 6 that the GA would make the final decision, then the GA reviews the documentation and makes the decision at its next meeting. If necessary, then an electronic vote may be utilized at this stage, but usually that would only occur after the GA has had a chance to discuss the issue at a face-to-face meeting. The decision is properly minuted. Those minutes should be made public through normal channels, i.e. publication on the website.

If Step 6 determined that the MB would make the final decision, then the GA is informed of the MB's decision. The MB Chair may inform the GA via the regular GA Chair/MB Chair teleconferences or at the next face-to-face meeting.

7 Stage 5 – Issuing of Deprecation Notice

Step 13: Issue the deprecation notice

Once the deprecation of the artifact has been approved, IHTSDO issues a deprecation notice with the following information:
- The name of the artifact being deprecated;
- The date when the artifact will be deprecated;
- The reason for deprecation; and
- The level and duration of support for the artifact.

The deprecation notice should be issued immediately after the approval (Stage 4) and no later than:
- 1 month for the Regular Deprecation Process; or
- 1 week for the Fast-Track Deprecation Process.

Step 14: Artifact is "Artifact Deprecated With Support"

The artifact will then be considered as a "Deprecated Artifact," effective as of the deprecation date and designated "Artifact Deprecated With Support."

Step 15: Artifact is "Artifact Deprecated Without Support"

After the support time period, the artifact will be designated "Artifact Deprecated Without Support" and will be archived in accordance with the IHTSDO Deprecation Policy and made available without support.

8 Stage 6 – Evaluation

Step 16: Evaluation of the deprecation process

Once an artifact has been designated "Artifact Deprecated Without Support," an evaluation of the process is undertaken to evaluate the decisions that were taken in relation to the artifact and also, where appropriate, to ensure that the deprecation notice has been followed. The evaluation should be completed by the staff lead and take no longer than one month to complete. The evaluation is given to the CEO and MB. Adjustments to this process are made as appropriate.

9 Summary and Timeline

Stage/Step	Action	Actors	Documents	Outcome	Timeline
Stage 1	**Initiation of Deprecation**				
Step 1	Initial Discussions	CEO, internal and external stakeholders		Better idea of impact on IHTSDO and other stakeholders	1 month
Step 2	CEO selects a staff lead; the staff lead selects support staff	CEO, staff lead, other staff members		Determination of who has responsibility for the process and who will assist staff lead	1 week
Step 3	The staff lead drafts the Deprecation Document using the Deprecation Template	Staff lead, staff support, input from other actors if necessary	Deprecation Template, Deprecation Document	Initial plan developed	1 month
Step 4	The staff lead shares the Deprecation Document with the rest of the Management Team and solicits input	Staff lead, MT	Deprecation Document	MT improves the document and the plan	2-4 weeks
Stage 2	**Review of Proposal for Deprecation**				
Step 5	CEO sign-off to proceed	Staff lead, CEO	Deprecation Document	CEO is on board	1 day
Step 6	MB sign-off to proceed	Staff lead, staff support, CEO, MB, GA	Deprecation Document, MB briefing papers	MB is on board, GA is informed	The next MB meeting
Stage 3	**Deprecation Consultation**				
Step 7	Announcement that deprecation consultation will commence	Staff lead, staff support	Announcement through website and collaborative platform	Community of Practice and Members alerted to coming consultation period	Announcement, then wait 30 days
Step 8	Consultation period	Members, CoP	Announcement through website and collaborative platform Deprecation Document, Google Form	Members and CoP provide input	2-3 months (or for Fast-Track 2 weeks)

Stage 4	**Deprecation Decision**				
Step 9	Analysis of the data	Staff lead, staff support	Deprecation Document, slide deck showing the data, briefing papers	Member and CoP input taken into account, plan modified	2 weeks to 1 month
Step 10	CEO sign-off on decision and plan	Staff lead, staff support	Deprecation Document, slide deck showing the data, briefing papers	CEO is on board	1 day
Step 11	MB sign-off on or approval of decision and plan	Staff lead, staff support, CEO, MB	Deprecation Document, slide deck showing the data, briefing papers, minutes of meeting	MB approves the plan or is on board	Next MB meeting (or if Fast-Track, electronic vote)
Step 12	GA approval of decision and plan, or GA is informed of MB decision	Staff lead, staff support, CEO, MB, GA	Deprecation Document, slide deck showing the data, briefing papers, minutes of meeting	GA approves the plan or is informed	Next GA meeting or next GA Chair/MB Chair teleconference
Stage 5	**Announcement of Deprecation**				
Step 13	Issue the deprecation notice	Staff lead, staff support	Announcement on website and collaborative platform	Members and CoP alerted to the decision, plan and timeline	0 to 30 days after decision (for Fast-Track, 0 to 7 days after decision)
Step 14	Artifact is "Artifact Deprecated With Support"	Staff lead, staff support			Depends on plan
Step 15	Artifact is "Artifact Deprecated Without Support"	Staff lead, staff support			Depends on plan
Stage 6	**Evaluation**				
Step 16	Evaluation	Staff lead and staff support, CEO and MB	Report, this process document	CEO and MB briefed, process and process document improved	Initially 2 months after approval, again after full deprecation