

4.3.1.3 Descriptions

Overview

A description may be created in an extension as part of the process of adding a new concept, or adding a translation or alternative synonyms to an existing concept. Extension descriptions are distributed in a [description file](#), which follows the standard [RF2 release file format](#). For more details on the principles and processes for authoring descriptions in an extension, please refer to [5.4.3 Authoring Descriptions](#).

Attributes

In addition to the four [common attributes](#), descriptions also have a `conceptId`, `languageCode`, `typeId`, `term` and `caseSignificanceId`.

`conceptId`

The `conceptId` attribute links the description to the concept that it describes. The `conceptId` may refer to a concept in the same extension module or to a concept in a module on which the extension module depends.

`languageCode`

The `languageCode` is a two-character string, which specifies the language of the description using the [ISO 639-1](#) standard (e.g. 'EN', 'ES'). Please note that the `languageCode` specifies only the language of the description (e.g. English or Spanish) and does not indicate the dialect (e.g. US English or GB English). Dialect preferences are represented by language reference sets. Extensions may use a `languageCode` not used by the International Edition.

`typeId`

The `typeId` is a SCTID that specifies the type of the description. The value of this attribute must be a descendant of [Description type](#). Possible values include [Fully specified name](#), [Synonym](#), and [Definition](#). Note that [Definition](#) is used for text definitions, which are not included in the main description distribution files. Instead, descriptions of type [Definition](#) are distributed in a separate text definitions file.

`term`

The `term` attribute is a text string that describes the given concept. The term is represented using UTF-8, which allows non-English character sets to be used, such as the accented characters used in Nordic languages, Hindi characters and Chinese characters. The maximum length of a fully specified name or synonym is defined in the [Description format reference set](#) as 255 characters. Longer terms can be used for text definitions, which may be up to 4096 characters in length.

`caseSignificanceId`

The `caseSignificanceId` attribute is a SCTID which specifies how the case of the characters in the term may be changed when using the term. The values of this attribute always refer to descendants of the concept [Case significance](#), and at the time of this publication, the three possible values are [Entire term case insensitive](#), [Entire term case sensitive](#), or [Only initial character case insensitive](#).

Examples

In [Figure 4.3.1.3-1](#) a row is presented from the descriptions table of the 20170901 US edition. Note that this description is associated with the extension concept from the previous [example](#).

Figure 4.3.1.3-1: A row from the description table in the 20170901 US Edition

Please note the following:

- The description id uses a namespace identifier allocated to the National Library of Medicine (NLM). This indicates that this description was created by the NLM.
- The description id uses a partition identifier of "11". This indicates that the description was created in an extension.
- The moduleId indicates that this description is included in the [US National Library of Medicine maintained module](#), which is the same module that the associated concept (from the previous example) is included in.
- The description id and the conceptId both use a namespace identifier owned by the NLM. This indicates that this description is associated with a concept created by the same extension producer.
- A languageCode of "en" indicates that this description uses the English language.
- The typeId indicates that this description is a [Synonym](#).
- The term indicates that the string "Persistent asthma" is used to describe the concept 5281000124103.
- The caseSignificanceId indicates the term is [Entire term case insensitive](#). This means that the term can be displayed using any alternative casing, such as "PERSISTENT ASTHMA" and "persistent asthma".

In [Figure 4.3.1.3-2](#) a row is presented from the descriptions table of the 20170430 Canadian edition. Note that this description is associated with a concept from the International Edition.

Figure 4.3.1.3-2: A row from the description table of the 20170401 French Canadian extension

Please note the following:

- The description id uses a namespace identifier allocated to Canada Health Infoway (CHI). This indicates that this description was created by the CHI.
- The description id uses a partition identifier of "11". This indicates that the description was created in an extension.
- The moduleId indicates that this description is included in the [Canada Health Infoway French module](#).
- The conceptId refers to the concept [1475003 | Herpes labialis](#) from the International Edition. This indicates that this term may have been created as a language specific term for an international concept.
- A languageCode of "fr" indicates that this description uses the French language.
- The typeId indicates that this description is a [Fully specified name](#).
- The term indicates that the string "herpès labial (trouble)" is used to describe the concept [1475003 | Herpes labialis](#). Please note the semantic tag, "trouble" is a French word for "disorder".
- The caseSignificanceId indicates the term is [Only initial character case insensitive](#). This means that the term can be displayed as either "Herpès labial (trouble)" or "herpès labial (trouble)".