



Harmonising Nursing Terminologies Using ICNP

Harmonising terminologies for nursing practice

The International Classification for Nursing Practice (ICNP), a product of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), is an agreed terminology or dictionary of terms that encourages nurses to describe and report their practice in a systematic way. The resulting information is used reliably to support care, effective decision-making, and inform nursing education and health policy.

One important goal for ICNP is to harmonise content across various nursing, as well as broader health care, terminologies. An example of using ICNP to harmonise nursing terminologies involves Clinical Care Classification (CCC) which is administered by SabaCare. ICNP and CCC are similar in several respects. They both describe the problems or needs that nurses identify (nursing diagnoses, e.g. impaired mobility), the things they do (nursing interventions, e.g. teach about safety measures), and the outcomes of nursing care (e.g. no falls). In addition, both ICNP and CCC support documentation of nursing practice in Electronic Health Records (EHRs).

However, ICNP and CCC have some differences. ICNP is a larger terminology that organises and classifies terms, using advanced computer-based techniques, according to their relationships with each other. CCC concepts are coded and classified in a four level nursing framework with 21 categories or Care Components (e.g. Bowel/Gastric, Health Behavior, Safety).

Partnership to Harmonise ICNP & CCC

Through a formal harmonisation agreement, ICN and SabaCare have been working

together on a programme of activities that seeks to ensure alignment between ICNP and CCC. Team members from ICN and SabaCare examined whether terms or concepts within CCC had equivalent concepts within ICNP and whether the ICNP concepts could be categorised in the CCC framework.

Examples of Harmonisation Products

- A table of equivalents, pairing up 165 nursing diagnosis concepts within the two terminologies, was developed, which provides a vehicle for transforming CCC-encoded data into ICNP (e.g. a CCC concept in a local system can be converted via the table into its equivalent ICNP concept for use, perhaps in an ICNP-oriented national reporting system).
- A table of ICNP Nursing Diagnoses/Problems (n=521) categorised according to the 21 CCC Care Components provides one approach to conceptually organise or view ICNP concepts for implementation in the EHR.
- Additional products mapping ICNP & CCC interventions are in development.

This work moves us closer to a broader harmonisation of nursing domain content.

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November 2018