



Benefits of ICNP

Using ICNP to enhance SNOMED CT®

Ensuring nursing is adequately represented in multidisciplinary health information systems

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 enables nurses to describe and report their practice in a systematic way. The resulting information is used to support care and effective decision-making, and to inform nursing education and health policy. SNOMED Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT), the world's most comprehensive multi-disciplinary health terminology, is owned and maintained by SNOMED International. It is intended for use by all types of healthcare professionals, including nurses. Robust systems and processes within ICN and SNOMED International assure the integrity of both terminologies.

As ICNP is intended for use by and for nurses, ICN has been able to focus attention on the development of ICNP specifically for nursing practice. This has resulted in a rich and comprehensive resource that nurses can use to describe and report in detail the things that they see (diagnoses, e.g. nausea) and the things that they do (interventions, e.g. counselling). The potential benefits of a consistent approach to capturing nursing data are far-reaching. However, nurses do not practice in isolation. They practice alongside many other disciplines. One of the potential risks of a specific nursing-focus is that nursing will be somehow disconnected from a larger health information landscape.

Through a formal collaboration agreement, ICN and SNOMED International have been working together on a programme of activities that seeks to ensure alignment, where appropriate, between ICNP and SNOMED CT

thus **ensuring that nursing remains connected.**

Work has involved the identification of equivalencies in diagnostic and interventional statements between the two terminologies. This has involved teams from ICN and SNOMED International examining whether terms or concepts within ICNP have equivalent terms or concepts within SNOMED CT (sometimes the words themselves may differ but the underlying meaning is identical). This work has resulted in the inclusion of many new concepts within SNOMED CT which has helped to ensure that the terminology continues to adequately reflect nursing practice and has provided further quality assurance for ICNP.

Tables of equivalents, pairing up concepts within the two terminologies, have also been developed, thus providing a vehicle for transforming ICNP-encoded data into SNOMED CT (e.g. an ICNP concept in a local system can be converted via one of the tables to the equivalent SNOMED CT concept for use in a multidisciplinary record). **By providing a robust pathway from ICNP to SNOMED CT, the tables of equivalents help to ensure that users of ICNP can continue to use their preferred terminology while remaining a central part of the bigger picture.**

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