Why use ICNP?

Increasing nursing visibility, ensuring safety and enhancing quality

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.

ICNP brings value to nursing practice and to wider health care in several ways.

Increasing nursing visibility

ICNP celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2014. It has evolved over this time, through a dedicated programme of work and through the involvement and contribution of many tens of thousands of nurses and other healthcare providers, terminology experts, information technology specialists, electronic health record developers, policy makers and educationalists.

The result is a robust resource that provides a comprehensive view of nursing practice. Several organisations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and SNOMED International have recognized the value of ICNP, and draw on it to enhance their own products - collaborative work with WHO and SNOMED International has resulted in new nursing content for the International Classification of Health Interventions and SNOMED Clinical Terms.

Through the work with WHO and SNOMED International, ICN is helping to ensure that nursing is adequately represented in multidisciplinary terminologies. This will help healthcare practitioners and health policy makers to identify health needs, target resources and track outcomes more effectively.

The nursing contribution to healthcare often remains hidden. Through ICNP, ICN is helping to ensure that nursing is visible in multidisciplinary reporting systems, thereby future-proofing the profession.

Ensuring safety

Another important outcome of this work has been the identification of equivalencies between ICNP and other terminologies. This facilitates the accurate transformation of information from one terminology to another. This work has been extended also to other nursing terminologies, such as the Clinical Care Classification. This gives nurses choice in which terminology to use, without limiting their participation in a wider information space. Perhaps more importantly, it gives nurses confidence in the quality of the information they need to make clinical decisions, without being required to consider the nuances of the particular terminology used to represent that information i.e. the use of ICNP becomes a means to an end – better safer care - rather than an end in itself.

Good information is a pre-condition for safe, effective and efficient nursing practice. Through ICNP, ICN is helping to ensure the currency and accuracy of information throughout the increasingly-complex healthcare journey.

Enhancing quality

ICNP facilitates a consistent approach for nurses 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). Nurses are using ICNP in

electronic systems in Norway, Portugal, Korea, Switzerland and a host of other countries to ensure that health records are of the highest quality.

The use of ICNP encourages individual nurses to reflect and make improvements to health care. And ICNP further drives up quality and safety by facilitating improved information management to support more effective clinical decision-making.

ICNP supports nursing policy-makers by populating a range of indicators that highlight the effectiveness of practice.

ICNP-encoded data is being put to good use through research that is highlighting good practice and identifying trends, and evaluating care across settings and over time.

Quality improvement is reliant on useful and usable information. Through ICNP, ICN is helping to ensure a consistent approach to nursing data collection. This is driving up the quality of documentation, the quality of care and the effectiveness of nursing practice.

Why do people choose ICNP?

People choose ICNP for a number of reasons:

- ICNP has a strong track record of successful implementation and use in a range of applications, in a variety of settings and in a number of countries.
- ICNP is maintained by a dedicated and friendly team of experts and is supported by ICN under an established programme of work that seeks to transform nursing and improve health through the visionary application of information and communication technology.
- ICNP is comprehensive, flexible and continually updated to reflect the broad and changing requirements of nursing practice.
- ICNP is available in a range of formats to suit individual needs.
- ICNP is freely available for non-commercial use. Commercial use of ICNP follows a simple schedule and incurs very modest fees, with no upper limit on the number of potential users.
- ICNP is built on a formal foundation that ensures consistency across the terminology.

- ICNP is currently published in 18 different languages, with additional translations in the pipeline:
    - Brazilian Portuguese
    - Chinese (Simple)
    - Chinese (Traditional)
    - English
    - Farsi (Persian)
    - French
    - German
    - Icelandic
    - Indonesian
    - Italian
    - Japanese
    - Korean
    - Norwegian
    - Polish
    - Portuguese
    - Romanian
    - Spanish
    - Swedish
- ICNP is easy to obtain via the ICN web pages.

ICN is committed to giving nurses the tools they need to support good healthcare in an information age. ICNP forms an integral part of that commitment.

CONTACT DETAILS

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