



The future of ICNP

At the end of July 2020, ICN held two meetings open to ICNP R&D Centres and ICNP translators to provide an update on the work ICN has completed to ensure ICNP continues to be well managed, developed and widely used. Board members, along with staff Claire Medd and David Stewart, supported by consultants Nick Hardiker and Amy Amherdt, have been working on these plans over the last few months. This paper provides a summary of the information shared during these meetings.

The process ICN has gone through to reach a decision on the future of ICNP includes:

- A review of ICN's governance structure and operational management of ICNP, understanding current costs, benefits and risks for ICN.
- A consultation with ICN membership (NNAs and R&D Centres) to understand what members want from ICNP going forward.
- An exploration of options for managing ICNP, from continuing internal management to selling the product.
- A marketing analysis which identified some key challenges, including limited uptake and amount of resources required to sustain ICNP.

The consultation process with all ICN members (over 130 National Nursing Associations) was undertaken by survey; 51 NNAs responded. From that, it was clear that 18 countries were using ICNP in some way, and through interviews with 15 of those NNAs, ICN had a wider picture of both the way ICNP has been used, and the future requirements of ICNP for members.

The results show that there is a global move to have policies in place to develop electronic nursing records, but plans for implementing these are limited. Whilst our NNAs recognise the importance of collecting data on nursing activity (98% of our responders), they report that there is limited recognition by nurses of the value of collecting nursing data. 70% of the NNAs that responded to the survey do not use ICNP, so it is clear barriers to implementation need to be addressed. The survey highlights some of the barriers such as structures and motivation within the local health system and difficulty with implementation.

The survey results show a high confidence in ICNP with 85% recommending its use, and 18 countries stating that they are using ICNP or plan to use it in the future. It is also interesting to see where it is being used, and that it is being incorporated into electronic health records (EHRs).

The ICN Board decided to develop a deeper relationship with SNOMED International to help extend the use and uptake of ICNP, access its skills in managing terminology and minimising the ongoing ICN investment in ICNP product management. SNOMED already has agreements with 50 countries, thus a great opportunity to increase ICNP use.

ICN noted feedback from the member survey from the three areas with heavy use or planned heavy use of ICNP: Portugal, Norway and Quebec. They were not averse to the idea of SNOMED International managing the development, maintenance and distribution of ICNP going forward, with the following conditions:

- ICN retains absolute ownership of ICNP
 - Low income countries are not in any way disadvantaged
 - There is the possibility to develop extensions to SNOMED CT to cover non-core content
 - Access for R&D purposes is not restricted
 - This arrangement should not come at a cost to ICN and there should be some shared revenue arrangement.
 - There should be some additional benefits to ICN member countries.
- ICN believes that most of these principles have been addressed in the agreement with SNOMED which was signed an agreement with SNOMED International in July 2020, which will enable SNOMED International to incorporate ICNP into its product in the next release in 2021, whilst continuing to make ICNP available as a separate product that will be distributed by SNOMED International from September 2021. Countries that are not SNOMED members and are using ICNP can continue to use ICNP into the future.

The agreement also allows for nursing content within SNOMED CT to be included within ICNP, and this will be an opportunity for ICNP to grow, but this will only be done with agreement from ICN. ICN will establish governance arrangements that will include representation from R&D Centres to operate as the ICN control on ICNP.

The benefits of this new partnership are:

- Increase uptake and influence of nursing terminology around the world, open access up for EHR global and local vendors, and give ICN a seat at the table to influence future nursing terminology for use within SNOMED CT that serves the continuum of care delivered by a multidisciplinary team.
- Allow access to technical experts in the management of terminologies. SNOMED International will continue to manage the development of ICNP as directed by ICN.
- Improve operations by leveraging SNOMED's marketing capability and their processes for updating, maintaining and distributing products.
- No further financial investment required by ICN to support ICNP and its future maintenance and development. There is no financial agreement with SNOMED International so there is no cost to ICN other than that which will be in-kind through our ongoing commitment to give direction to the development of ICNP.

The key principles of the agreement with SNOMED are:

- ICN has a role to play in developing nursing content within SNOMED CT and remains responsible for approving any updates or changes to ICNP.
- SNOMED International will incorporate ICNP into their product.
- ICN has a role to play in the development of content across the continuum of care within SNOMED CT.
- SNOMED International will continue to maintain and distribute the English version of ICNP. The translated versions of ICNP will continue to be available on ICN's website.
- ICN can still collect revenue from licenses with countries and with vendors outside of any countries licenses that are in place with SNOMED International.
- ICN will provide review of nursing content prior to inclusion into SNOMED CT as part of the quality assurance process.
- ICN retains ownership of ICNP.
- ICNP will still be available free of charge for use in research.

This meeting with the ICNP R&D Centres and ICNP translators helped ICN finalise a frequently asked questions paper on the topic of ICN's agreement with SNOMED International, which is now available on the ICN website, [click here](#).