

## WHO-FIC Network Annual Meeting 2022

The theme of the 2022 annual meeting of the World Health Organization Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC) Network was “interoperability and mapping of health information.” At the start of the weeklong meetings, WHO relayed the state of the Network. Notable updates included more than twenty translations are underway and WHO clarified the intent to maintain one common open-source platform, the Foundation, as the knowledge source for the classifications in the WHO-FIC. WHO has made significant progress on tools, including the IMplementation and INformation Tracker (iMINT) provides views by region or by country. In addition, the proposal platform (<https://icd.who.int/dev11>) has been updated to accept proposals on postcoordination, extension codes, and suggestions for the reference guide.



WHO-FIC webinars over the last year have included 11,000 participants from 140 different countries and additional planned webinars are posted on the WHO website (<https://www.who.int/standards/classifications>). ICD-11 training through the WHO Academy is under development. The WHO Classifications and Terminologies Unit is also working on a reference guide for the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) and plans to produce a guide to the multiple reference guides (a meta-guide). There is also a new mapping task force, where the top priority is to make a list of maps requested by countries and establish mapping use cases.

Highlights from some committees and reference groups are summarized below.

### *Morbidity Reference Group (MbRG)*

The group discussed how to ensure descriptions in ICD-11 are maintained. Approximately 27% of ICD-11 categories have descriptions, which is over eighteen thousand descriptions that are intended to differentiate items. The aim is to make descriptions robust but simple and limited. The group will produce a methodology paper. There was also an update on work on an international case mix tool. A project is underway to convert the Nordic grouper, which is open source and has an online tool, for use with the current WHO-FIC classifications. This involves replacing ICD-10 with ICD-11 and replacing the Nordic Classification of Surgical Procedures (NCSP) with International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI). Currently, effort is focused on mapping the classifications and once that is done, they will explore the grouping logic.

The MbRG requested a project document. The WHO, in collaboration with the MbRG, is testing select neoplasm codes to obtain feedback on consistency in the coding tool guidance

and coding results. WHO staff are analyzing results from an initial test of several cancer codes and additional codes will be tested before year end. Mortality Reference Group (MRG) Approximately half the countries in attendance are working on implementing ICD-11 for mortality reporting. Efforts are underway to transition existing mortality tools from ICD-10 to ICD-11 and develop additional tools. This includes the Iris application, which is the legacy application that has been in use for many years, and development of Digital Open Rule Integrated cause of death Selection (DORIS). Such tools are key enablers to implement ICD-11 for mortality.

The ultimate goal is to have a standard set of rules based on the Reference Guide and to harmonize Iris and DORIS to ensure outcomes are compatible. Manual coding inter-rater reliability is very poor, so using either tool will result in better data and improved comparability.

#### *Education and Implementation Committee (EIC)*

Approximately two dozen countries shared their status on implementing ICD-11 for either mortality or morbidity. Many have created a roadmap, with the earliest implementation dates ranging from 2024 to 2027. Challenges include funding, infrastructure, and other resources. Some shared that COVID-19 delayed planning. Meanwhile, providers in Kuwait have been documenting diagnoses in ICD-11 since December 2021. While Australia, Canada, Germany, and the UK relayed they are actively engaged in analyzing the casemix index impact, stakeholder communications, and/or translation and mapping efforts. The EIC, MbRG and WHO are establishing an Implementation Forum and will be issuing a call for volunteers.

The WHO has contracted with a vendor to produce the WHO Academy training modules. The first module, with foundational training on ICD-11, will go into production later this year. The strategy is to start with one module as a prototype, with evaluation and feedback before proceeding with others. Topics for future modules include more in-depth training on morbidity as well as mortality, a traditional medicine module, and other specialties. Countries developing their own training in the meantime should ensure it is consistent with the WHO reference guide.

#### *Informatics and Terminology Committee (ITC)*

The committee discussed the progress that has been made on various tools being developed to support implementation. For mortality, these include DORIS and the Electronic Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (eMCCD). New tools such as the ICHI Coding Tool as well as updates to existing tools have been completed. For example, the ICD-11 Coding Tool has additional postcoordination support. Possible future enhancements to the WHO-FIC Foundation may include populating the content model with other “open source” systems, e.g., the Mondo Disease Ontology and Human Phenotype Ontology.

The content alignment and harmonization project is shared by the Family Development Committee and the ITC. Work on the unified foundation for ICD-11, ICF, and ICHI thus far has included harmonization of ICF Body Structure entities and ICD-11 Anatomy and Topography extension codes. Next steps are to describe different use cases of joint use of the WHO-FIC reference classifications and inventory areas that overlap.

#### *Summary*

Over the course of five days, the WHO-FIC Network successfully advanced the committee and reference group work items that support the WHO-FIC strategic plan. Updates from the WHO Classifications and Terminologies Unit also indicate progress on education, reference materials, and tools to assist Member countries with implementation. The WHO World Health Assembly in May 2023 will include a report on ICD-11 implementation status and possibly a resolution for ICHI.

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