

National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedure (NICIP) Code Set-Release Covering Letter

April 2020 Release

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The April 2020 release (Version 26.0) of the National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedure (NICIP) code set is available from NHS Digital from the 1st April 2020. The NICIP code set is intended for use in all Clinical Imaging Department information systems.

Key statistics for this release

Total number of procedure codes with history: 11966

Active procedure codes: 4833

New SNOMED CT mapping: 0

New procedure codes: 0

Replaced procedure codes: 0

Retired procedure codes: 0

NICIP releases

The biannual release of the National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedure (NICIP) code set scheduled for 1 April 2020 will only include the NICIP-OPCS-4.9 mapping update and no changes to NICIP-SNOMED CT mappings. Further information can be found on our collaboration site [Delen](#)

All other NICIP files will be static from the June 2019 release and can continue to be used. All files dated with the April 2020 release date are included but remain static apart from the NICIP-OPCS-4.9 files. The next full release will again follow our schedule for October 2020.

The 'Power of Information'¹ published in May 2012 set out the strategy for care information to deliver a range of benefits to patients and the public through better sharing of information. A key enabler for that is the proposal to base coded clinical information on a single clinical terminology of SNOMED CT®. The National Information Board endorses the move to adopt SNOMED CT to support direct management of care and has stated that the entire health system should adopt SNOMED CT by April 2020.

NHS Digital has therefore been consulting with NICIP stakeholders to obtain information to help develop a withdrawal plan for NICIP with a move to the use of a single terminology of SNOMED CT and to identify any outstanding issues that may need to be addressed to facilitate this. The consultation results are currently available on the [Consultation Hub](#).

The NICIP codes (with or without SNOMED CT mappings) are only available from the NHS Digital [Technology Reference-data Update Distribution \(TRUD\)](#) service. Further information and related documentation (including associated NICIP editorial principles) are available at the NICIP [homepage](#). Registration is required prior to downloading products from TRUD. In circumstances where customers are unable to access the TRUD service due to licensing restrictions, please contact the Information Standards Service Desk for further assistance (information.standards@nhs.net).

Please note that there is a break in consecutive numbering of the NICIP releases on TRUD. The October 2012 (version 12) NICIP release was numbered

¹ [The Power of Information](#)

DIAGIMG_11.0.0_20121001000001. The April 2013 (version 13) NICIP release was numbered DIAGIMG_15.0.0_20130401000001. The June 2019 release was numbered DIAGIMG_27.0.0_20190601000001 and the April 2020 release was DIAGIMG_29.0.0_20200401000001. This was to keep the NICIP release in line with the main terminology release files numbering sequence.

NICIP codes to SNOMED CT codes

All procedures within the NICIP code set have a direct map to a SNOMED CT concept. New content, new SNOMED CT mappings, replaced and retired procedure codes are listed additionally on the spreadsheet in separate tabs to highlight the changes for ease of use (see NICIP Implementation Guidance documentation Appendix for the format of these tabs). Specific questions regarding the reason for deprecation of a NICIP code should be directed to information.standards@nhs.net.

In each release some NICIP descriptions or associated data may be modified as the code set regularly undergoes quality assurance review processes. For minor changes, the NICIP codes associated with these procedures are not replaced by new codes as there has been no change to the meaning of the code.

NICIP codes to OPCS-4 codes

A mapping table (Version 19) for NICIP codes to OPCS-4.9 is also available. The first release of this table was in October 2009. NHS Digital, as the UK National Release Centre (UK NRC) for SNOMED CT, has consulted with stakeholders and compiled the evidence that the NICIP codes to OPCS-4 mapping table is being used in the production of data to inform the National Tariff Payment System data in the field of Clinical Imaging. Whilst the relevant governance bodies have approved the transition of the mapping table to supported product in principle, NHS Digital have identified some necessary improvements to the product development environment such that the stable production has the potential to be compromised. Once these tooling enhancements are in place the status will be formally updated to supported product. The 2014 consultation and subsequent investigations have led the CIMG to conclude that, rather than introduce more complex rules into the mapping table, the process should not be fully automated, and that imaging professionals should work closely with the clinical coding departments to ensure that the correct OPCS-4 codes are assigned according to coding national standards and local protocols.

The report of the findings following the consultation on the utility of the mapping table from NICIP codes to OPCS-4 is available on the [consultation website](#).

In the meantime, it is highly recommended that the mapping table is subjected to local validation and assessment processes prior to use, although it has been reviewed by clinical imaging and coding experts. Feedback from any local validation/test use is welcome, and can be submitted via the Information Standards Service Desk at information.standards@nhs.net.

The mapping table is also part of the national release of the NICIP code set. It is only available from the TRUD service and can be obtained electronically by registering online.

Note on SNOMED CT procedure code pre-coordinated lateralisation and the NICIP-OPCS-4 mapping table

As noted in the NICIP Editorial Principles document, laterality has previously been stated in the NICIP code and description, but expressed in the SNOMED CT concepts and OPCS-4 codes via post-coordination. However, there are now a number of pre-coordinated SNOMED CT concepts in the NICIP-OPCS-4 mapping table. This has resulted in a number of OPCS-4 laterality codes being included in the mapping table in the cases of those pre-coordinated SNOMED CT concepts.

If the SNOMED CT concept associated with a given NICIP code relies on post-coordination to express any laterality, then no OPCS-4 laterality codes will be included for that NICIP code. However, it is expected that pre-coordinating clinical imaging procedures with laterality will increasingly be represented in SNOMED CT, which will result in progressive updates to the NICIP-OPCS-4 mapping table with OPCS-4 laterality codes.

Clinical Safety

For clinical safety reasons it is **strongly recommended** that users update the full NICIP code set, rather than extracts from it, to prevent inconsistencies when receiving information from other organisations. This action will also prevent issues arising where there have been small changes made to some representations, such as capitalisation, without retiring the code. Users should also note that reliance on the short code to identify a procedure represents a clinical risk. Short codes must always be checked in conjunction with the 40-character description to ensure that the correct NICIP code has been utilised. The detail of minor changes contained within this release of the NICIP code set is available on request via the Information Standards Service Desk (information.standards@nhs.net).

NICIP code set format

The files described below are static from the June 2019 release and can continue to be used.

The NICIP code set is available in four variants in two separate spreadsheets:

- 1) With maps to SNOMED CT and with limited term history information

This version is for those organisations that are migrating from a previous version of the list and use the data in an integrated environment (with systems using SNOMED CT).

- 2) Without maps to SNOMED CT but with limited term history information

This version is for those organisations that are migrating from a previous version of the list and do not use the data in an integrated environment (with systems using SNOMED CT).

- 3) A simple list of the latest current descriptions without SNOMED CT mappings and without term history information

This version is for those organisations using the list for the first time that do not use the data in an integrated environment (with systems using SNOMED CT).

- 4) A simple list of the latest current descriptions with SNOMED CT mappings and without term history information

This version is for those organisations using the list for the first time that use the data in an integrated environment (with systems using SNOMED CT).

Further guidance may be obtained by contacting the Information Standards Service Desk (please call 0300 30 34 77, or email information.standards@nhs.net) – please include the words ‘Diagnostic Imaging’ in any enquiry.

Background

On 26th January 2007 a set of procedure codes and descriptions for use in the representation of Clinical Imaging Procedures was released by the former UK Terminology Centre (UKTC).

NHS Digital, as UK National Release Centre for SNOMED CT, is responsible for the ongoing updating and maintenance of this code set, aligning it with the biannual release of the UK extension of SNOMED CT.

The work has been overseen and endorsed by a management group consisting of key stakeholders including the following:

- Royal College of Radiologists (including a number of special interest groups)
- British Nuclear Medicine Society
- British Medical Association
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Society of Radiographers
- Department of Health and Social Care
- NHS Digital
- Regional NHS representatives
- System suppliers
- Representatives of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland
- NHS England

The current NICIP code set (DSCN 27/2009) **has been mandated and remains applicable** for all in-scope use cases across the NHS by the Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care (ISB). The information standard ISB 0148 can be viewed by visiting: <http://www.isb.nhs.uk/library/standard/125>.

New national governance arrangements for information standards, data collections and data extractions came into effect on 1st April 2017. On this date the Data Coordination Board (DCB) took over responsibility for the approval of standards from the Standardisation Committee for Care Information (SCCI). ISB and SCCI approved standards remain in force.

More information is available at: <http://digital.nhs.uk/isce>

The NICIP code set has been delivered to strict editorial principles and is supplied in the form of both a spreadsheet and a tab delimited text file with accompanying implementation guidance. It is strongly recommended that users read the associated NICIP code set implementation guidance and editorial principles. The editorial principles and the

implementation guidance highlight issues that may be informative to users including how to make requests for change. Further information regarding requests for additions or changes can be found in the documentation at the NICIP [homepage](#).