

# Briefing Note for the Editorial Advisory Group, Member Forum, Content Managers Advisory Group, and Clinical Leads

4 April 2023

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## Inactivation of the Navigational Concept hierarchy

### Purpose

The purpose of this briefing note is to inform the SNOMED International Community of Practice and select Advisory Groups and Project Groups of the intention to inactivate the Navigational concept hierarchy (<<363743006 | Navigational concept (navigational concept)|) which consists of 634 concepts that have been placed in this hierarchy due to their inability to be defined or to present a universally understood meaning, thus violating the Understandability, reproducibility, and Useability standards for SNOMED CT.

### Background

This issue was brought to light during a discussion at the Modeling Advisory Group meeting in September 2022 as part of a discussion related to the impact of semantic tags on the MRCM it was suggested that the Navigational concept hierarchy be inactivated, due to the fact that while it is stated in the SNOMED International Editorial Guide that these concepts are no longer supported in the International release and are not suitable for data recording or aggregation of data, they are being used in some implementations in place of more suitable Clinical findings, Record artifacts, etc.

The current SNOMED Editorial Guide states, “Navigational concepts were created to group other concepts without explicit regard for defining attributes (since there were none). Their purpose was to provide top level groupers for subsets and reference sets used in implementations. Because the Reference Set mechanism is now available, there is no longer a need for navigational concepts in the International Release; however, they can be added at the national or lower level.”

### Issues

There are a number of Navigational concepts that are currently in use in one member country and would require suitable replacements to ensure data traceability. These include:

CONCEPTID	FSN
394617004	Result (navigational concept)
160237006	History/symptoms (navigational concept)
309157004	Normal laboratory finding (navigational concept)

267368005            Endocrine, nutritional, metabolic and immunity disorders  
 243800003            Test categorized by action status (navigational concept)  
 250541005            Biochemical finding (navigational concept)

In consultation with the user of these concepts, they have asked that we provide substantial lead time before inactivating and replacing the high usage concepts.

## Next Steps

1. Solicit input from the membership and Community of Practice on the impact that inactivation of the Navigational concept hierarchy would have on their implementations.
2. For those concepts with high usage, develop suitable replacement concepts and encourage migration of existing implementations to these new concepts.
3. Notify the Community of Practice that the Navigational concept hierarchy will be inactivated without replacement (aside from the exceptions noted above) in the December 2023 release.

## Recommendations

**Request:** Comments on the proposal to be submitted to the Chief Terminologist ([jca@snomed.org](mailto:jca@snomed.org)) by June 30, 2023.

Approvals	Date	Name
Chief Terminologist		
Director of Content and Mapping		

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*James T. Case, 2023-03-26*