

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

June 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."

A key challenge is that additional effort is needed by implementers to produce hierarchical relationships under these groupers. This is also the key criticism of the lack of relationships that cannot be fulfilled by the navigational concepts.

#### Issues

There are a number of Navigational concepts that are currently in high use in the UK and would require suitable replacements to ensure data traceability. The table below lists the affected concepts and the proposed replacement values.

CONCEPTID	Fully Specified Name	Inactivation reason	Replacement
394617004	Result (navigational concept)	Nonconformance to editorial policy	423100009  Results section (record artifact)
160237006	History/symptoms (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	1003642006  Past medical history section (record artifact)  422625006  History of present illness section (record artifact)
309157004	Normal laboratory finding (navigational concept)	Nonconformance with editorial policy	442082004  Measurement finding within reference range (finding)
267368005	Endocrine, nutritional, metabolic and immunity disorders (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	362969004  Disorder of endocrine system (disorder)  2492009  Nutritional disorder (disorder)  75934005  Metabolic disease (disorder)  414029004  Disorder of immune function (disorder)  OR New extension concept in record artifact hierarchy
243800003	Test categorized by action status (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	No replacement
250541005	Biochemical finding (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	Biochemistry result section (record artifact) - NEW CONCEPT
309230008	Borderline laboratory finding (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	Recommend: New extension concept
309158009	Laboratory finding abnormal (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	442096005  Measurement finding outside reference range (finding)
118246004	Laboratory test finding (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	118245000  Measurement finding (finding)  441742003  Evaluation finding (finding)  OR New extension concept in the record artifact hierarchy
282465005	Physiological functions and activities (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	1184588000  Functional status document section (record artifact)
165347009	Laboratory test result borderline (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	Recommend: New extension concept
309159001	Normal hematology finding (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	Hematology test within reference range (finding)   - NEW CONCEPT

250207003	Hematology finding (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	4321000179101   Hematology report (record artifact)  OR Hematology result section (record artifact) - NEW CONCEPT
370121008	Disorder of blood / lymphatics / immune system (navigational concept)	Ambiguous	414029004   Disorder of immune function (disorder)  3305006   Disorder of lymphatic vessel (disorder)  414022008   Disorder of cellular component of blood (disorder)
309194008	Hematology finding abnormal (navigational concept)	Nonconformance to editorial policy	34641000087106   Hematology test outside reference range (finding)
276437003	Skin, hair and nail finding (navigational concept)	Nonconformance to editorial policy	106077005   Integumentary system finding (finding)
243798005	Procedure categorized by action status (navigational concept)	Non-conformance to editorial policy	No replacement

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 and are suitable for the International release, develop suitable replacement concepts and encourage migration of existing implementations to these new concepts.
3. For those concepts with high usage that are not suitable for the International release, encourage extensions to create replacement concepts in their extension.
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

The recommendation is to utilize the refset mechanism as a means for grouping concepts to fulfill specific requirements. Alternatively, if the meaning is clear for a national extension, navigational concepts can be added to the extension.

**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	May 24th, 2023	Monica Harry

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