

A week of records

The last week of October was a week of records for IHTSDO. First, more Member- and observer-countries than ever attended the business meetings in Amsterdam to discuss results and future directions for IHTSDO. Then, later in the week, IHTSDO welcomed 303 attendees from 31 countries, the highest number of participants ever, to the yearly SNOMED CT Implementation Showcase.

Business meeting bursting with ideas

The business meeting agenda was packed with content that will help drive IHTSDO and SNOMED CT forward. There were broad strategies about the future, including discussions of a new Affiliate License agreement and a shift from being a largely academic institution to a product and services organization. The four Standing Committees - Content, Quality Assurance, Implementation and Education, and Technical - focused on issues ranging from anatomy and site/laterality to OWL Distribution, Computable SNOMED CT Languages to the Quality Assurance Framework.

Meanwhile, many more groups were meeting: five Special Interest Groups (Anesthesia, Dentistry, Implementation, Mapping and Nursing); Member Translation Group; E-Learning Reference Group; Event,

Condition and Episode Project; Microbiology Reporting Group; Observable and Investigation Model Project Group; and the Substance Hierarchy Redesign & Drug Concept Model Project Group. The Member Forum meeting was packed, with over 40 participants from around the world, providing a great opportunity for National Release Centers to learn from one another and change ideas on the health and direction of IHTSDO.

Implementation Showcase shines

Right after the enormously successful business meeting, we went right into our biggest showcase ever. For the first time ever at an IHTSDO event, a Minister of Health delivered an address. Over 60 sessions ran over the course of two days in the beautiful Royal Tropical Institute of Amsterdam.

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Head of Terminology Dr. Kent Spackman will retire at the end of 2014.



The Dutch Minister of Health, Mrs. Edith Schippers, gave a well-attended keynote speech at the Showcase.

“I believe we can achieve incredible effects in health care if we start making full use of the technological possibilities we have already available,” the Dutch Minister said.

Mrs. Schippers then went on to describe three goals of the healthcare system in the Netherlands: Within five years the Dutch government aims to ensure that eighty percent of the Dutch chronically ill patients have direct access to their medical data, seventy-five percent of people with diabetes and Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are able to monitor their own health and send data digitally to doctors or nurse practitioners, and everyone that receives care at home has telehealth available twenty-four-seven.

“A precondition to reach these goals is to adopt one standard of terminology,” Mrs. Schippers said, and so set the scene for two days packed with tutorials, poster presentations and vendor exhibitions on SNOMED CT implementation.

Semantic strategy in EU

Edwin Maarseveen, Policy Officer at the European Commission, reported on the activities within the European Commission (E C), as well as the collaboration towards semantic interoperability by EU member states and the EC jointly. He stressed that EU member states have concluded that “Semantic interoperability is the ultimate level of interoperability” and that the EC as well as the member states agree that it is of high importance to reach semantic interoperability to ensure safe care for all European citizens, no matter where in Europe they receive care.

NT Cheungs lecture

Dr. NT Cheung delivered an inspiring James Read Memorial Lecture with the title “Making Health Records Make Sense in Hong Kong.” He provided an account of the way the Hong Kong Hospital Authority (HKHA) developed its EHR system and used this to illustrate key messages that are more widely applicable.

Stressing the importance of standards, Dr. Cheung stated, “a standardized eHealth system can achieve better, safer, more efficient care delivery on an industrial scale at a reasonable cost.” However, this goal has to be reached one step at a time rather than by a big bang approach.

He identified benefits that had already been delivered within HKHA and noted the opportunity to extend these benefits more widely. Work is now in progress to expand the use of the eHealth systems to other healthcare provider organizations in Hong Kong. In this context, the

benefits of standards in general and SNOMED CT in particular are becoming even more evident. He concluded that a standardized eHealth system may in fact be the only thing that can meet the requirement to deliver large scale, high quality healthcare services at a reasonable cost.



Thank you NICTIZ

Many thanks to our co-host, NICTIZ, and to the beautiful and historic city of Amsterdam for providing such a wonderful location for this year’s event.

The SNOMED CT Implementation Showcase offered more than 60 presentations and sessions. Abstracts and speeches can be downloaded [here](#)

The next SNOMED CT Implementation Showcase will take place in Montevideo, Uruguay in October 2015. See you there!

Standing Committee Review

The original IHTSDO Articles of Association from the organization's formation in 2007 included descriptions of four Standing Committees (SCs): Content Committee, Technical Committee, Research and Innovation Committee [now called the Implementation and Education Committee], and Quality Assurance Committee.

The SCs were subordinate to the Management Board and were responsible for advising the Board on priorities and issues pertaining to their particular areas of competence. For a very small organization that had emerged out of an active and passionate Community of Practice, it was an excellent way to bring in expertise and advice and to make the organization a strong, collaborative platform for continuing the growth of SNOMED CT.

Review needed

IHTSDO has grown and evolved over the course of seven years. The staff and number of Members have increased, and SNOMED CT, as a product, has developed. In April 2014, the General Assembly decided that it was time to review the SCs. Were they fulfilling their mission? Should there still be four? Are those four areas still appropriate? Do they have the right skills sets? What should be their role?

The General Assembly formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Standing Committees, chaired by Management Board member Jeremy Thorp and including members of the General Assembly, Management Board, Management Team, Member Forum and Standing Committees/Community of Practice.

The Ad Hoc Committee met virtually four times during Q3 of 2014. It reached a number of conclusions, including:

The organization has grown and has greater capability than it did in 2007.

Management has matured, with more formality and control over the work plan and budget process.

IHTSDO is becoming less academic and more of a product and service organization.

The Member Forum, rather than the SCs, is responsible for prioritizing work, and the SCs no longer propose new

work items.

There is no longer a 1:1 relationship between Management Team members and SCs.

There is a continuing problem of the nominees for SC positions coming from a small pool of predominantly English-speaking countries.

However, the Ad Hoc Committee felt strongly that the Community of Practice added much value to the organization. Similarly, the Committee recognized that the organization needs support and advice to progress the strategic directions and work plan.

Proposal ready in April '15

The focus of the SCs, according to the Ad Hoc Committee, should be to provide advice and review to the Management Board and Management Team as required. It is no longer appropriate for SCs to propose new work items or to be responsible for the delivery of work items.

Alongside this, the IHTSDO requires specific, time-limited input on individual work items that might involve a range of experts, from the Community of Practice and beyond, as members of task-and-finish groups. It also needs mechanisms to enable the growth of the Community of Practice, through education and sharing of experiences.

The Ad Hoc Committee reported these interim findings to the General Assembly at the Amsterdam meeting. The Management Board will discuss the conclusions reached thus far and make additional decisions to enable the Ad Hoc Committee to develop firm proposals for the April 2015 meetings in Copenhagen, prior to the next SC election cycle.

More information about the [Articles of Association](#)

Terms of Reference of the four SCs (requiring a [CollabNet login](#)):

- [Content](#)
- [Implementation and Education](#)
- [Technical Committee](#)
- [Quality Assurance](#)

Building the business case for SNOMED CT

IHTSDO has released of a new study to help current and prospective Members of IHTSDO build the business case for national SNOMED CT adoption and IHTSDO membership.

Membership and national use of SNOMED CT have a number of advantages in terms of reduced costs and improved care (see box).

Encoded health information and decision support tools enable these benefits. Consistently codified information enables comparison, exchange and reuse throughout the healthcare system.

Therefore, an open SNOMED CT-based ecosystem presents an opportunity for exponential increases in benefits.

To learn more about these benefits and about how to build the business case for sustaining and expanding investments in SNOMED CT to drive your health system improvements, please see the executive summary presentation and the complete report by visiting the IHTSDO website.

Membership and national use of SNOMED CT benefits:

- Cost savings in terminology development, licensing fees, and transcription costs of mapping to ICD or other coding systems;
- Reductions in inappropriate or duplicate testing
- Reduction in adverse drug events
- Improved management of key disease groups, such as cardiac care and oncology

EU Assessment of SNOMED CT



Lead researcher Sylvia Thun, professor of information and communication technology in health care at Niederrhein University, Germany, has received a total of €1m from the EUs Horizon 2020 to conduct as research project on the evaluation of a single Europe wide medical language. The “Assessing SNOMED CT for Large Scale eHealth deployment in the EU” project deals with whether it makes sense, from an economic point of view, for Europe to introduce a single medical language. Niederrhein University is leading a consortium of 15 international partners working in various work packages based on the medical language Snomed CT. The World Health Organization (WHO) will participate as a partner of the project

LOINC - SNOMED

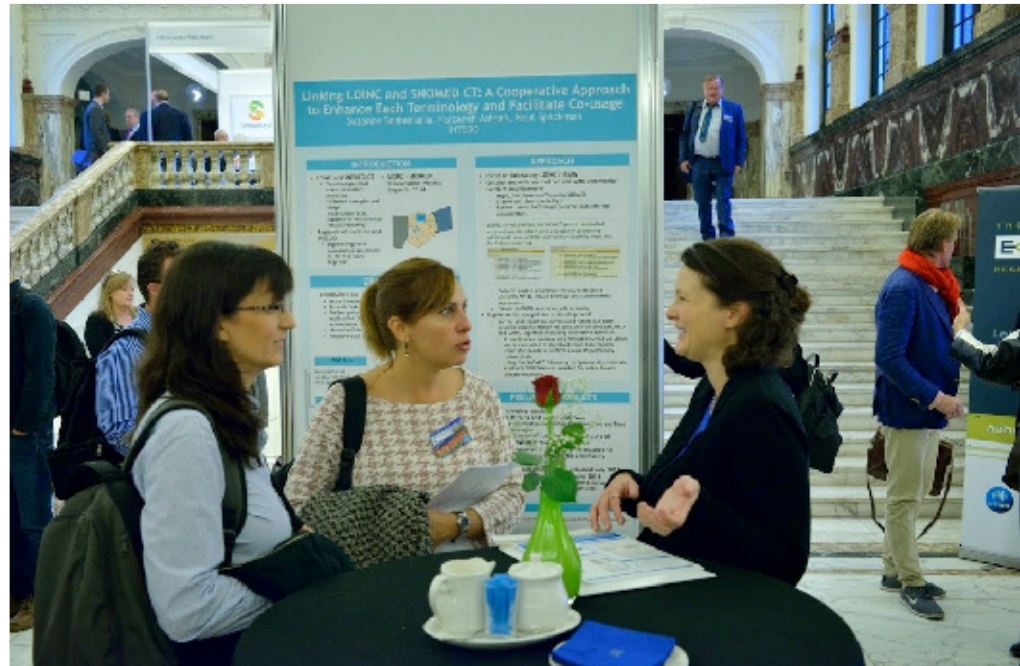
The Technology Previews of the LOINC - SNOMED CT Cooperation Project (the LOINC Term to SNOMED Expression Reference Set and the LOINC Part to SNOMED Map Reference Set Technology Previews) are now available.

Technology Preview Reference sets represent a proof of concept and are distributed for evaluation purposes only. They are not for use in production clinical systems or in clinical settings. This Technology Preview should be evaluated in the context of the July 2014 SNOMED CT International Edition and June 2014 LOINC release.

All files for the LOINC Term to SNOMED Expression Reference Set and the LOINC Part to SNOMED Map

Reference Set Technology Previews are available from the “Technology Preview Packages” area in the

“SNOMED CT International Releases” project on the IHTSDO Workspace and from the IHTSDO website.



New Management Board

The General Assembly has appointed Mr. Jamie Ferguson as IHTSDO Management Board director. Jamie brings a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the board. Currently the Vice President of Health IT Strategy and Policy at Kaiser Permanente, he has been involved in IHTSDO and SNOMED CT work for many years. His experience includes work with the IHTSDO Implementation and Education Committee, the CMT collaborative steering committee, CIMI, the WHO steering group for global eHealth interoperability standards, and HL7.

Jamie succeeds Ms. Lene Vistisen. IHTSDO would like to thank Lene for her committed and valuable contribution to the organization over many years. While serving as a Management Board director, she co-chaired the Member Forum and made enormous contributions to making the

group a stronger, more cohesive body that supports IHTSDO and NRC development. Lene was also a devoted chair of the Content Committee and active in the development of IHTSDO since its formation.

The IHTSDO Management Board Representatives, as of October 28, are:

- Ian Arrowsmith, National Health Service UK
- John van Beek, Chair, NICTIZ
- David Bunker, MTIM, GAICD, National eHealth Transition Authority Australia
- Kathy Farndon, NHS England
- Jamie Ferguson, Kaiser Permanente
- Duncan McNeil, PumpCo
- Jeremy Thorp, National Health Service UK
- Andrew M. Wiesenthal, MD, SM, Deloitte Consulting
- Julian Zelingher, MD, MSc, MPH, Clalit Health Service

A great day for the nurses

The IHTSDO Lifetime Achievement Award is the most prestigious of all IHTSDO awards, and its purpose is to acknowledge a truly influential or ground-breaking person in the terminology world and thank him or her for sustained efforts to promote SNOMED CT or other IHTSDO products or services.

On 28 October at the annual awards dinner, IHTSDO honored Anne Casey, MSc, FRCN, from the United Kingdom as the 2014 winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award. She is the third winner of the award, joining Roger Côté (2010) and Martin Severs (2012), and the first nurse to receive the award. Now retired, she was previously with the Royal College of Nursing.

Anne Casey was nominated because of her exemplary content work, strong support for standards development and implementation, consummate leadership, passion for education, and enthusiasm about health and healthcare.

Some of her many achievements as well as formal positions and roles and contributions were mentioned during the speech given by Kathryn Hannah on behalf of the nominators.

“Perhaps, what we most appreciated about Anne was her focus on making sure that the non-terminologist healthcare providers understood the importance of representing their practice via standardized documentation supported by common terms. She was known for promoting multidisciplinary views of the terminology including Medicine, Nursing and a wide variety of ancillary professionals”, said Kathryn Hannah.

“Anne is very deserving of the IHTSDO Lifetime Achievement award because of the outstanding and significant contributions she has made to the development and evolution of SNOMED CT and to IHTSDO as well as to wider healthcare worldwide,” added Kathryn Hannah.

IHTSDO Award for Excellence

IHTSDO’s Award for Excellence this year was given to another outstanding nurse: Judith J. Warren, PhD, RN, FAAN, FACMI.

The Award of Excellence was established in 2008 for the purpose of recognizing an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of SNOMED CT and/or its successful implementation in any aspect of health and social care across the world.

Dr. Warren has been an elected member of an IHTSDO Standing Committee since their inception, first on the Quality Assurance Committee and currently on the Content Committee.

Dr. Warren became involved with SNOMED in 1995, when the American Nurses Association’s appointed her as the official ANA liaison to the SNOMED Editorial Board.

“Dr. Warren is an advocate for the patient, a role model for informaticians, and a diligent promoter of IHTSDO and SNOMED CT for use in creating policy and tools to implement the highest quality and safest patient care for the lowest cost”, said Susan Matney on behalf of the nominators at the Award Ceremony in Amsterdam.

New Standing Committee members elected

According to the Articles of Association, Standing Committee members serve two-year terms. We are looking forward to be working with newly elected members, as well as those retaining seats. Thank you to all of our volunteers and to those who volunteered but did not get elected this time. For the terms beginning January 2015 the following individuals were elected:

Content Committee:

Newly Elected Members

- Amy Wang
- Elaine Wooler
- James Campbell
- Jennifer Garvin
- Julian Costello
- Matthew Cordell
- Michael Osborne

Members Retaining Seats

- Daniel Karlsson
- Geraldine Wade
- Elze de Groot
- James Case
- Jo Goulding

Implementation & Education Committee

Newly Elected Members

- Alejandro Lopez Osornio
- Denise Downs
- Heather Grain
- Marion Lyver
- Feikje Hielkema-Raadveld
- Sukhbir Singh

Members Retaining Seats

- Anne Randorff Højen
- Andrew Frangleton
- Olivier Bodenreider
- Susan Matney
- Mikael Nystrom
- Philip Wilford

Quality Assurance Committee

Newly Elected Members

- Aimee Furber
- Jane Howarth
- Jonathan Hartmann
- Stuart Murphy

Members Retaining Seats

- David Evans
- David Robinson
- Nicolette de Keizer
- Ryan Butcher
- Paul Amos
- Kathryn Hannah
- Julie Richards
- Arjuna Vijayanayaga

Technical Committee

Newly Elected Members

- Brian Carlsen
- Guillermo Reynoso
- Jeremy Rogers
- Jonathan Meadows
- Michael Lawley
- Reuben Daniels
- Ronald Cornet

Members Retaining Seats

- Bouchta Irbouh
- Dion McMurtrie
- Harold Solbrig
- Jay Kola
- Senthil Nachimuthu

From the IHTSDO newsfeed

IHTSDO recruiting

Currently, IHTSDO invites applications for three different positions: Business Analyst, Technical Project Manager and a Front End Developer. More information about the three positions can be found [here](#).

New website

IHTSDO has launched a new brand system to reinforce its position as the global leader in healthcare terminology. Both the SNOMED CT brand and the IHTSDO brand have been upgraded to reflect our global reach, reputation and desire to deliver a clear promise to our stakeholders. The new feel and look was launched during the last week of October together with a new website, which will be used to engage with potential customers and prompt further contact.

Dr. Kent Spackman retires

IHTSDO's Head of Terminology, Dr. Kent Spackman, announced in October he will retire at the end of 2014.

Dr. Spackman's decision to retire will bring to a close a remarkable career encompassing decades of service to the mission of creating a global healthcare language.

Dr. Kent Spackman is an internationally recognized expert on biomedical knowledge representation. He was elected as a Fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics in 1992. He became the Scientific Director of SNOMED in 1997 and was responsible for the development of SNOMED RT and the merger of the Read Codes and SNOMED RT to create SNOMED CT. He received the CAP Outstanding Service Award from the College of American Pathologists in 2000 and



received an AMIA President's Award in 2002, both in recognition of his work on SNOMED. He joined IHTSDO as Chief Terminologist upon its formation in 2007 and has shaped SNOMED CT into the leading global clinical terminology we have today.



Delivering
SNOMED CT

The IHTSDO Newsletter provides news and features from IHTSDO, delivering SNOMED CT. If you have comments on the editorial content, then please contact the editor, Charlotte Schwarz-Rosman, at csr@ihtsdo.org