Briefing Note for the Editorial Advisory Group
24 October 2023

Proposal to inactivate the top-level concept Special Concept

Purpose

The aim is to expand the proposal for inactivating navigational concepts (<< 3743006|Navigational concept(navigationalconcept)|), as outlined in this briefing note, to encompass the entire top-level hierarchy of Special Concepts (<< 370115009 |Special concept (special concept)|).

Background

In the process of getting ready for the upcoming educational materials related to terminology binding for Expo 2023 and the newly designed SNOMED CT Implementation course, it has become clear that explaining the significance and meaning of the concepts within the "special concept" hierarchy is extremely challenging. Additionally, considering the proposal to eliminate the navigational concept subhierarchy, it will ultimately reduce the subtypes of "Special concept (special concept)" to zero, leaving the top-level hierarchy empty and lacking a clear scope or purpose.

In essence, we are left with an empty top-level hierarchy that lacks any subtypes or discernible use cases within the terminology, raising significant concerns about its practicality and utility.

Issues

The only concept affected by this proposal is the concept 370115009 |Special concept (special concept)|. The |Special conceptI hierarchy appears to be ill-formed due to its lack of providing any explicit semantics or intended coverage for this subhierarchy.

A review of all editions available from the https://browser.ihtsdotools.org/ confirms that none of the available editions have extension concepts within this hierarchy, except for the UK Edition which includes extension concepts that are subtypes of 363743006 |Navigational concept (navigational concept)|. This means that no extension concepts fall within the scope of the expression constraint: << 370115009 |Special concept (special concept)| MINUS << 363743006 |Navigational concept (navigational concept)|

Next Steps

1. Solicit input from the membership and Community of Practice on the impact that inactivation of the Special concept hierarchy would have on their implementations.
2. For extension 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 Special concept hierarchy will be inactivated without replacement (aside from the exceptions noted above) in the ?? release

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