■ INTERNATIONAL HEALTH TERMINOLOGY
STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

Introducing SNOMED CT to Low-to-Medium Income Countries (LMICs) in the ASEAN region

Presenter: Alvin B. Marcelo, University of the Philippines Manila

Audience

Participants from low-to-medium income countries and consultants implementing eHealth in these areas

Objectives

After reading the abstracts, the reader will understand the opportunities and challenges with SNOMED CT adoption in the Southeast Asian region (ASEAN). They will also see strategies for introducing SNOMED CT in particular and health informatics standards in general in LMICs.

Abstract

SNOMED CT is an important standard for semantic interoperability. Yet its adoption in Asia is slow and erratic. By 2015, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will liberalize the practice of medicine (and other services and transactions) across borders through the ASEAN Economic Community. This cross-border exchange of economies bring opportunities to improve healthcare in the region but also poses challenges with effective communication between practitioners. Some of these opportunities are telemedicine, bulk procurement of essential medicines, and e-Learning. The biggest challenge is the lack of a common language and the preponderance of Eastern medical concepts. This abstract describes these opportunities and challenges and proposes some strategies in introducing health informatics standards and SNOMED CT within the region, to wit: leveraging the SNOMED CT ontology on the backend of the national health insurance programs (for business intelligence and fraud detection), mapping of local terms with SNOMED Clinical Terms, recruitment of local academic institutions for the aforementioned activities, and early demonstration of cross-border inter-operability for health insurance claims via a network of advocates in the region such as the Asia eHealth Information Network (AeHIN).

References

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