INTERNATIONAL HEALTH TERMINOLOGY
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Implementation of SNOMED CT in Hospital Italiano of Buenos Aires, a practical approach with clinical focus

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Audience

Implementers, NRC's, clinical users.

Objectives

To present the experience of a large implementation of SNOMED CT, using the Spanish edition, and adopting a Managed Content Additions approach.

Abstract

Hospital Italiano of Buenos Aires, Argentina, is a university hospital system that includes a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) service with a strong ambulatory care system distributed in all Buenos Aires metropolitan area.

The implementation of SNOMED CT started with the development of a terminology server in 2004, with the main focus of providing a system that would allow clinical users to select clinical terms using natural language queries. The implementation is based on the Managed Content Additions strategy, adding new concepts and descriptions as required to match the local jargon and level of granularity.

The result is the creation of an SNOMED CT extension that contains 25,000 concepts and +500,000 descriptions. The extension also includes cross-maps with many standard classifications and institutional vocabularies.

The electronic health record in Hospital Italiano is an in-house development, so the User Interface for SNOMED CT data entry was developed from scratch to utilize the Terminology Server to provide search and refinement tools based on natural language search terms.

A team of terminology experts maintain the local extension, managing suggestions from the users, new mappings and periodic SNOMED CT updates.

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