



The HL7 TermInfo Project - Overview and Recent Updates to the Draft Standard for Trial Use for using SNOMED CT in HL7 Information Models

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Audience

Implementers of SNOMED CT terminology in standard information models, specifically HL7 Clinical Document Architecture (CDA) Release 2 (and other HL7 Version 3 models).

Objectives

Attendees will be introduced to the TermInfo Project and be made aware of overlaps and issues that frequently occur when using SNOMED CT with HL7 CDA R2 (and other standard information models), as outlined in the recently re-balloted TermInfo Draft Standard for Trial Use (DSTU).

Abstract

The TermInfo Project of the HL7 Vocabulary Work Group is developing standard guidance for the use of SNOMED CT terminology in HL7 Version 3 information models – specifically CDA R2 in the current DSTU. The HL7 CDA is a document markup standard specifying the structure and semantics of "clinical documents" for the purpose of exchange, and CDA R2 is being widely accepted and implemented worldwide. The TermInfo DSTU (*HL7 Version 3 Implementation Guide: TermInfo - Using SNOMED CT in CDA R2 Models, Release 1*) contains guidance achieved by consensus development relating to:

- Areas of semantic overlap - for example, attributes supported by both models (e.g., negation)
- Areas specific to each technology (for example, constraining appropriate SNOMED CT content for CDA R2 documents)

The presentation will highlight topics from the TermInfo DSTU using real-world examples, including:

- Possible differences in interpretation between the representation of content in elements of the SNOMED CT concept model and the structure and semantics of the HL7 Reference Information Model (RIM). These overlaps, double meanings and, in some cases, gaps in or between these models are identified.
- Identified options for use of SNOMED CT concepts, in both pre- and post-coordinated forms, in different attributes of HL7 RIM classes where the primary focus is on classes used in the HL7 Clinical Statement pattern. This includes advantages, disadvantages and recommendations on which option(s) should be used to provide for the greatest level of semantic interoperability, and recommended advice on mapping between alternative options.
- The importance of TermInfo as specific guidance for use in CDA R2 (and potentially all HL7 standards – document, messaging, and template) in order to achieve their stated goal of semantic interoperability when creating or interpreting clinical information using concepts from SNOMED CT. This guidance is becoming increasingly important as the use of SNOMED CT is mandated by government authorities and SNOMED CT is being widely adopted and used within HL7 and other stakeholder communities.