

National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedure (NICIP) Code Set

Frequently Asked Questions

1 What are the National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedure (NICIP) codes?

The NICIP code set is a comprehensive national standard set of codes and descriptions for imaging procedures and is maintained by the UK Terminology Centre. It is intended for use in all imaging department information systems. The NICIP code set has been approved by the Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care (ISB) and is mandated for all in-scope use cases (DSCN 27/2009). Further detail about the information standard can be found at: <http://www.isb.nhs.uk/library/standard/125>.

2 What are the benefits of having a national standard set of procedures?

Procedures in the NICIP code set are described in accordance with editorial rules so that they are unambiguous and consistently represent clinical imaging procedures across the NHS. If all systems use the same procedure code set then data quality will be improved and system interoperability will be enhanced leading to a potential reduction of patient safety issues arising from the misinterpretation of information in electronic systems.

3 What is the scope of the NICIP code set?

The list was originally designed to cover all imaging specialties in the scope of the former NPfIT National PACS programme. Currently, under the maintenance of the UK Terminology Centre, all conventional imaging modalities are in scope for the use of the NICIP code set. The NICIP code set provides a consistent description of imaging procedures and a standard terminology for describing aspects of clinical imaging procedures. This facilitates identification of procedures undertaken in an imaging examination along with the communication of clinical information associated with the identified procedures. The NICIP code set is intended for use in all imaging department information systems.

Administrative procedures such as ordering of external films and administrative aspects of the examinations themselves such as location, report status and visit number are deliberately excluded.

4 What is the relationship of the NICIP code set to Payment by Results?

Mappings to SNOMED CT from the NICIP code set are provided. This enables mapping to OPCS-4 codes which are the basis for the assignment to the unbundled imaging HRGs. The first release of the NICIP-OPCS-4 mapping table was in October 2009 and the current release is still a **test product**. It is highly recommended that the mapping table is subjected to local validation and assessment processes prior to use, although it has been reviewed by clinical imaging and coding experts. Feedback from any local validation/test use is welcome and can be submitted via the Information Standards Service Desk at information.standards@hscic.gov.uk.

The UK Terminology Centre (UKTC) of the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) are consulting with stakeholders to determine whether the National Interim Clinical Imaging Procedures (NICIP) to OPCS-4 mapping table is being used in the production of data to inform the Payment by Results (PbR) data in the field of Clinical Imaging. The consultation is intended to inform the decision making process and plans to adjust the mapping table to meet user requirements.

The mapping table is part of the national release of the NICIP code set. It is only available from the Technology Reference data Update Distribution (TRUD) service and can be obtained electronically by registering on line via the TRUD link at <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/data/uktc/imaging>.

Responsibility for assigning any particular OPCS-4 code to an HRG is that of the Health and Social Care Information Centre. Their helpdesk can be contacted by email (enquiries@hscic.gov.uk) or telephone 0845 300 6016.

5 Who decides what goes in the NICIP code set and assures its fitness for purpose?

The NICIP code set is governed by the Clinical Imaging Management Group (CIMG) which is made up of key stakeholder representatives and has a reporting line into the Department of Health via the National Clinical Lead for Imaging.

The CIMG is responsible for the editorial principles and meets on a regular basis to consider new requests and agree exceptions or changes to these principles. All new additions to the NICIP code set are subjected to robust quality assurance processes. Newly authored terms go through a rigorous inspection process within the UKTC before national release.

6 Who maintains the NICIP code set?

The NICIP code set is maintained by the United Kingdom Terminology Centre (UKTC), part of the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), based in Leeds.

7 How often is the NICIP code set updated and released?

The NICIP code set is released biannually. The release dates are the 1st of April and the 1st of October each year.

8 How do I request a change to the NICIP code set?

Clinicians and system managers working with the PACS and RIS systems can make requests for additions to the NICIP code set. All requests must first be checked for conformance to the NICIP Editorial Principles.

Requests for changes to the NICIP code set should be made via the UK Terminology Centre Request Submission Portal at <https://www.uktcregistration.nss.cfh.nhs.uk/rsp-nicip/user/authenticated/home.jsf>

9 Why is the NICIP code set mapped to SNOMED CT?

SNOMED CT is the single terminology which will be used in electronic records throughout the NHS. Where possible existing systems will be expected to interoperate with new systems and the mapping between the NICIP code set and SNOMED CT will facilitate that.

Further information about SNOMED CT can be found by visiting:

<http://www.ihtsdo.org/>

For SNOMED CT documentation - http://ihtsdo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/doc/

A diagnostic imaging procedure subset of SNOMED CT concepts has been developed based on the NICIP code set for National Programmes such as Choose and Book and HL7 Messaging. This NICIP code set aids consistency in data recording and information sharing and hence improves data quality.

10 Where can I download the NICIP code set and relevant documents?

All versions of the NICIP code set, both with and without SNOMED CT maps, are only available from Technology Reference data Update Distribution (TRUD) service. They

can be obtained electronically by registering on line via the TRUD link provided at <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/data/uktc/imaging>.

Supporting implementation guidance, editorial principles, frequently asked questions and release covering letter can also be found on the Health and Social Care Information Centre website: <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/data/uktc/imaging>.

11 Why is the NICIP code set referred to as interim?

As stated above, it is expected that all clinical information systems will eventually standardise on the SNOMED CT terminology and coding system – including those in imaging departments. The NICIP code set has been designed with the limitations of current systems in mind to support the rapid deployment of PACS systems in England. The mapping to SNOMED CT will also assist in the migration process from the NICIP code set.

12 Is it permissible for the NICIP code set to be used outside of the NHS or in countries outside the United Kingdom?

All versions of the NICIP code set, both with and without SNOMED CT maps, are only available from Technology Reference data Update Distribution (TRUD) service. They can be obtained electronically by registering on line via the TRUD link provided at <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/data/uktc/imaging>.

Overseas users that are not able to access the TRUD service due to licensing restrictions are advised to contact the Information Standards Service Desk for further assistance (information.standards@hscic.gov.uk).

Please note the UKTC is not obliged to accept requests for additions and changes or address maintenance issues identified by overseas users. Where there is a requirement for change identified outside of the UK, such requests should be submitted for consideration by a government agency of the country concerned.

Any specific queries not answered within these frequently asked questions should be directed to the Information Standards Service Desk via email: information.standards@hscic.gov.uk, and clearly marked “Diagnostic Imaging.”