

HINF Fall Seminar Series

Health Terminology Standards Issues, Trends and Strategies

Digital Excellence in Health
Architecture and Standards

NOV 25, 2020

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**Ontario
Health**

Overview

1. Clinical terminology experts on your team
2. Early engagement of clinical terminology experts
3. Leveraging terminology from others
4. Maintenance practices

Clinical Terminology Experts

- Involvement of clinical terminology experts is important to ensure appropriate application of terminology standards, considering the requirements and their interpretation in the solution design.
- There are many possible terminology standards that can be used to best represent the data, and clinical terminology experts have the knowledge and skills to help weed through the options.
- Some terminology experts have clinical backgrounds and informal learning regarding terminology standards and others are more formal. The terminology experts liaise with clinical and technical experts.

Early Engagement

- Any organization working with electronic health records should increase the use of terminology standards in their electronic health record solutions to improve clinical data capture and use.
- Early engagement of clinical terminology experts will help determine how best to address the terminology standards requirements in the solution.
- The more you can use standard data at the point of care the more meaningful the data will be; capture once, use many (with privacy considerations addressed); this helps with clinical data integrity/improvement and clarity of communication during current and future visits.

Leveraging from others

- The opportunity to leverage terminology standards already in use from other provinces, territories, or countries, where used for the same purpose and definition, can add value and improve the ability to share and interpret clinical data faster through reuse and reduced local maintenance.
- A comprehensive assessment or environmental scan is a necessary part of the standards selection cycle to ensure the use of more common (less proprietary) standards – determine how the standards are being used and ensure there is alignment.

Maintenance Practices

- Define processes for the maintenance of terminology standards early in the project to ensure updates and easier additions to terminology standards in the solution. This will support a means to keep the meaningfulness of the data in support of patients and clinicians current and relevant to the clinical documentation.
- Important to have continuous maintenance and improvement in terminology standards to support the dynamic nature and evolving requirements that support discoveries in medicine and healthcare.