



# IHTSDO Strategic Directions to 2015

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## Amendment History

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## IHTSDO STRATEGIC DIRECTION TO 2015

### 1 The Vision

The International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO) is governed by its Articles of Association, these Articles set out the vision of the Association in section 2.1 which are quoted below:

“The Objects of the Association are to:

- (a) enhance the health of humankind by facilitating better health information management;
- (b) contribute to improved delivery of care by clinical and social care professions;
- (c) facilitate the accurate sharing of clinical and related health information, and the semantic interoperability of health records;
- (d) encourage global collaboration and cooperation with respect to the ongoing improvement of the Terminology Products; and
- (e) provide the foregoing on a globally co-ordinated basis, thereby enabling the Members and the related organisations within their Territories to pool resources and share benefits relating to the development and maintenance of, and their utilisation of and reliance upon, the Terminology Products.”

### 2 Focusing the Vision

The strategic directions to 2015 conform to the stated vision of the IHTSDO but focus the Association’s main capacity and capability within that broad vision statement.

To decide where to focus, we have undertaken a variety of consultation processes. These include:

- Joint planning sessions with the Management Board and General Assembly;
- Consultations with members of IHTSDO’s General Assembly, Standing Committees, the Member Forum, the Affiliate Forum, and others;
- A focus group with users of SNOMED CT; and
- Invitations to comment issued to the global Community of Practice as a whole.



We would like to thank all those who took part in these discussions and contributed their advice and expertise to the development of the organization's strategic directions. In addition, we would like to thank IHTSDO's Australian Member for securing the services of Accenture to assist with clarifying the presentation of the strategic directions.

This document is the result of this input. Two presentations of the strategic directions are available. This document describes IHTSDO's plans for 2015 in text form. There is also a graphical presentation version. Under each strategic direction, specific initiatives, accountability targets, and shared goals are also identified.

In addition, to complement and ensure the implementation of the strategic directions, each of IHTSDO's Standing Committees is developing a related action plan in their areas of responsibility. IHTSDO will be completing more detailed templates for each strategic initiative, once the Standing Committee plans are approved. IHTSDO's annual Work Plans will also include concrete plans for making progress on the strategic directions in the year in question. We encourage members of the global Community of Practice to contribute to developing and refining these plans.

Following approval by the General Assembly, an annual review of the status of the strategic directions will be conducted, coinciding with existing reporting mechanisms.

### 3 Strategic Directions to 2015

In April 2008, the MB and GA agreed that the purpose statement or 'strap line' of the Association until 2015 should be to:

***“Broaden the use of SNOMED CT, within and across health information systems, countries and professions.”***

In order to achieve this transformation the Association needs fully understand what this statement means in greater detail and then set measures or objectives that demonstrate that it is making acceptable progress towards its attainment.

The purpose statement is dependent on two detailed pre-requisites that are described below:

- A set of technologies [guides, examples, software etc] that make SNOMED CT AND its relationships to other essential components of the computerised patient record easier to implement for its various users so that:



- The power of SNOMED CT enabled information is put into the hands of patients and their clinicians
  - Affiliates have ready answers and solutions to their questions
  - Vendors can build value added applications in their IT systems
  - The actual use of SNOMED CT within health and social care organisations has dramatically expanded
  - Cost effective technologies exist that enable SNOMED CT to be used with other international terminologies and classifications
- A sound and valued primary product [SNOMED CT] and a range of secondary products [eg maps and guides] that:
    - Are preferred and wanted by policy makers, clinicians and health & social care organisations
    - Are maintained and improved by a system with more capacity and capability
    - Are managed by a responsive organisation
    - Are funded in a financially sustainable manner that best serves citizens and Members
    - Are quality assured from not only a technical but also a clinical governance perspective

## 4 The Strategic Priorities to 2015

These pre-requisites are the basis for the organization's five strategic priorities for the next five years:

1. Make it easier to use SNOMED CT for priority use cases<sup>1</sup>
2. Produce robust terminology standards that are "fit for purpose" for priority use cases
3. Facilitate use of SNOMED CT with other international standards
4. Strengthen responsiveness and clinical governance of SNOMED CT
5. Sustain and strengthen the organizational foundations of IHTSDO

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<sup>1</sup> For the IHTSDO, priority use cases have been defined as follows:

- Facilitate the accurate collection and sharing of clinical, public health, and related health information through improving the semantic representation and interoperability of health records (including personal health records and those created by health professionals).
- Contribute to improved delivery of care by the clinical and social care professions through supporting efficient, effective, and safe decision support
- Enable 'health system' or 'secondary' uses of data held in individuals' health records. The range of secondary uses includes, but is not limited to; links with classifications and other tools that support quality improvement activities at the health system level, clinical research, and activity reporting.

It is recognized that some Members may also choose to focus on additional areas depending on national priorities.



## 5 Action Plans and Annual Work Plans

To complement and implement the strategic directions, each of IHTSDO's four Standing Committees is developing an action plan relevant to their area of responsibility. In addition, specific plans and actions will be instantiated in IHTSDO's annual Work Plans for each of the years covered by the strategic directions.

## 6 Strategic Priorities and Initiatives to October 2012

### 6.1 Introduction

The strategic initiatives to October 2012 informed by the detailed pre-requisites described within the vision and strategic direction section of this document. They are organized according to the strategic priorities, so that it is open and transparent that the organization's strategic initiatives, priorities, purpose, and vision are explicitly part of a single whole.

### 6.2 Strategic Initiatives to October 2012

The strategic initiatives are highlighted in bullet point lists to make them easily identifiable. It should be noted that these strategic initiatives apply predominantly but not exclusively to the priority use cases.

For the strategic initiatives, the organization has also specified:

- **Accountability Targets:** A target related to a strategic initiative by which the IHTSDO Management Board will be judged by the General Assembly. In simple terms, the Management Board of the IHTSDO is expected to deliver these objectives to time and specification and both are a necessary and sufficient basis for judging the performance of the IHTSDO Management Board. At the request of the General Assembly, a focused set of accountability targets has been selected. These are high priority areas, whether the outcomes are clear and where their achievement is largely within the control of the IHTSDO.
- **Shared Goals:** A goal to be delivered by the IHTSDO AND its Members, plus in some cases other partners. These goals recognize that achieving IHTSDO's strategic priorities will require the effort of many organizations and experts from around the world. In simple terms, the whole IHTSDO Community of Practice aims to achieve these goals, which are measured by the IHTSDO Management Board. IHTSDO will endeavour to contribute to these goals, but their achievement will depend heavily on the actions of IHTSDO's Members and their partners. Shared goals are an aspiration and are thus neither a necessary nor sufficient basis for judging Management Board performance.



## Strategic Priority 1

Make it easier to use SNOMED CT for priority use cases

- a. Improve understanding of SNOMED CT use in order to inform future directions
  - *SHARED GOAL: Define ways to measure and then achieve annual growth in the breadth and depth of use of SNOMED CT in Member countries.*
- b. Develop implementation guidance and resources in order to make appropriate use of SNOMED CT easier and more valuable, as well as to reduce risk
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Publish updated implementation guidance by January 2011*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Members offer education and implementation support for users of SNOMED CT in their jurisdiction*
- c. Facilitate sharing of tools and implementation resources with the aim of reducing duplication of effort and creating shared value globally
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Design, develop, and implement a platform to facilitate sharing of products, implementation tools, and resources that aim to reduce duplication of effort and cost, create a community gain from innovation, and help Members, Affiliates, and clinicians alike by the end of 2011.*
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Implement and maintain the core IHTSDO Workbench for design and development of SNOMED CT, in line with priorities identified in the Technology Roadmap produced by the Technical Committee*
  - *SHARED GOAL: At least half of IHTSDO's current Members have contributed to, or used resources from, the sharing platform by the end of 2012*
- d. Agree an action plan to accelerate global implementation of SNOMED CT
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Agreed action plan to accelerate global implementation of SNOMED CT in 2010 (implementation to follow in 2011 and 2012)*

## Strategic Priority 2

Produce robust terminology standards that are “fit for purpose” for priority use cases

- a. Produce and quality assure at least twice-annual International Releases of SNOMED CT
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Produce and quality assure at least two updates to the SNOMED CT International Release per year based on agreed priorities for quality enhancement of existing and expanded content in line with plans developed by the Content Committee (2010-2012)*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Growth in SNOMED CT translations that adhere to IHTSDO translation guidelines or standards*
- b. Increase involvement of the Community of Practice in the development and maintenance of SNOMED CT



- *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Mechanisms for collaborative editing using the IHTSDO Workbench in place and being tested by the end of 2012*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Strong global community of qualified editors contributing to International Release of SNOMED CT through collaborative editing by the end of 2015*
- c. Agree a program for quality enhancement of existing and expanded content, including documentation regarding the terminology and its maintenance process
- *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Define and publish at least 5 quality metrics by the end of 2012 that help users of SNOMED CT to understand fitness for purpose of SNOMED CT, including metrics that reflect agreed change management processes for the International Release of SNOMED CT.*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Researchers actively developing and evaluating methods for assessing fitness-for-purpose for particular use cases and contexts*

### Strategic Priority 3

Facilitate use of SNOMED CT with other international standards

- a. Establish and maintain constructive relationships with key international standards organizations
- *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Cooperation agreements in place with other major international standards developers (at a minimum, WHO, laboratory terminology developers, IEEE, HL7, and OpenEHR)*
- b. Improve understanding of SNOMED CT and its relationship with other international standards
- *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Define and produce core educational materials that help improve understanding about SNOMED CT and its relationship with other international standards by 2012*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Undertake active efforts to improve understanding of SNOMED CT and its relationship with other international standards among key stakeholders that is proportional, understandable and appropriate to their needs*
- c. Ensure that cost effective technologies exist, enabling the use of SNOMED CT with other international standards
- *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Published guidance on using SNOMED CT in conjunction with at least 1 widely-used international standard*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Tested and approved map between SNOMED CT and ICD-10 international edition*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Tested and approved map between SNOMED CT and ICPC-2*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Production processes and/or products (e.g. joint terminology development, maps, or implementation guidance) from at least one joint initiative to facilitate the use of SNOMED CT and another health information standard in use by the end of 2015*



## Strategic Priority 4

Strengthen responsiveness and clinical governance of SNOMED CT

- a. Ensure that users of SNOMED CT are strongly engaged in the work of the IHTSDO
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Establish plan to strengthen input from users of SNOMED CT to IHTSDO (including end users and system designers) in follow-up to the Implementation Action Plan, with a particular focus on seeking feedback on what is needed from the IHTSDO to improve their use of SNOMED CT*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Members have mechanisms for soliciting timely input from users of SNOMED CT on key issues and communicating that feedback to the IHTSDO<sup>2</sup>*
- b. Increase participation of international clinical bodies in the work of the IHTSDO
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Formal participation of international clinical bodies in the IHTSDO community of practice (at least 2 by 2012 and at least 4 by 2015),*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Produce at least one SNOMED CT reference set endorsed by the relevant international clinical body by 2012*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Formal participation of national clinical bodies in Members' SNOMED-related activities with particular reference to SNOMED CT quality and issue resolution*
- c. Provide an effective support infrastructure for the IHTSDO's global Community of Practice
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Expected response times for inquiries to the IHTSDO are established in 2010 and adhered to subsequently*

## Strategic Priority 5

Sustain and strengthen the organizational foundations of IHTSDO

- a. Encourage new Members to participate in IHTSDO
  - *SHARED GOAL: IHTSDO will increase its Membership by adding 4 new Members by the end of 2012.*
- b. Ensure financial sustainability for the work of the IHTSDO in a manner that best serves citizens and Members
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Ensure financial sustainability for the work of the IHTSDO as reflected by balanced budgets and audit reports that indicate that the accounts are kept in sound order (2010-2012)*
- c. Recruit and retain effective participants in IHTSDO governance bodies and a strong staff team.
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Agreed plan for the transition of governance in October 2012 as per the Articles of Association*
  - *ACCOUNTABILITY TARGET: Recruit and retain a strong core staff team, as per annual staffing plans in the Work Plan and Budget*
  - *SHARED GOAL: Increased participation in the Affiliate Forum*

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the mechanisms for gathering such input and providing feedback may differ considerably among Members.



- *SHARED GOAL: At least 80% of Members participate in the election of representatives to IHTSDO's Management Board and Standing Committees*
  - *SHARED GOAL: 100% of Members' annual obligations from the Articles of Association are fulfilled (including on-time submission of statements of accounts and payment of Membership fees)*
- d. Implement and maintain the IHTSDO Workbench for the development and maintenance of SNOMED CT
- *SHARED GOAL: IHTSDO Members who are undertaking terminology development and maintenance functions are actively using the IHTSDO Workbench*