

# The translation of Snomed CT

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Snomed CT is to be translated into specialist Swedish as used by health and welfare professionals. The National Board of Health and Welfare has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the translation is correct. The scope of the translation project is translation and translation quality control up to the point at which a concept has an approved recommended term in the target language. The special languages used by professionals in health- and social care are a mix of Latin, Greek, and Swedish terms and there are also aspects of how to write and use the Swedish language in a medical context. To ensure translation consistency, the translators, translation reviewers, quality reviewers and editors must comply with the linguistic guidelines that have been established for this purpose by an editorial board. The editorial board has regular co-ordination meetings to maintain overall consistency and quality.

The translation process consists of the following seven components: linguistic guidelines, subset selection, translators, translation reviewers, quality reviewers, an editorial board and post-editors. All seven are supported by a web-based translation tool.

The translation must be credible; methods and final translation are to be open to the scrutiny of stakeholders. Snomed CT is a terminology system in the sense that it is a collection of concepts that are related through conceptual relationships. The point of departure for the translation is the meaning of the concept as it is represented in Snomed CT. To ensure the best possible quality of the translation, the translators should first identify the Swedish concepts corresponding to the concepts described in Snomed CT. Then the translators should find the corresponding Swedish term that reflects each underlying concept.

Priority early in the translation work has been given to concepts which frequently recur, link, qualify and/or confer meaning to other concepts in different contexts. Other factors that influence the order, in which the Snomed CT concepts are translated, are whether approved concepts will be part of specific qualification pilot projects in the near future.

In total, about 40 persons are involved in the translation project. This number includes the translators engaged by the translation firm, and the clinicians employed by the National Board of Health and Welfare. All active concepts in Snomed CT, i.e. about 300,000 concepts, will be translated.

The translation work is expected to take four years and will be finished in December 2010. Thereafter both the Swedish translation and the linguistic guidelines will need to be maintained.

Out of the scope, and enforced in another project, is what is referred to as "qualification". In the qualification process, the recommended term will be tested in practice in the health and social care services. The aim of this is to test if the translated terms are relevant and correct, to add synonyms and concepts that might be missing in the Swedish version of Snomed CT, and to adapt the translation where necessary. The first qualification project will be planned and described in the autumn of 2008.