



TO: Jonathan Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, FACP, FACMI
Chair, HIT Standards Committee

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FROM: Doug Fridsma, MD, PhD
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IT

SUBJECT: Acceptance of New Versions of Minimum Standard Code Sets; Logical Observation Identifiers
Names and Codes (LOINC®) and CVX-Vaccines Administered

Background and Purpose

In the Standards and Certification Criteria interim final rule (75 FR 2014), the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (“the Secretary”) designated certain adopted vocabulary standards as “minimum standard” code sets (i.e., LOINC, SNOMED-CT and CVX). This designation recognizes that these code sets are maintained and frequently updated. The designation is also important for the purposes of testing and certification because we identified that vocabulary standards designated as minimum standard code sets provide a baseline or floor from which the Secretary (on a sub-regulatory basis) could “raise the ceiling” for what is permitted for testing and certification.

In response to public comments on our certification programs proposed rule, we identified in the Temporary Certification Program final rule (75 FR 36180) the sub-regulatory process we generally expect to follow when “accepting” newer versions of minimum standard code sets. This process includes reaching out to the HIT Standards Committee for its input and expertise prior to making a final decision on whether to accept a newer version. The Secretary’s acceptance of a newer version of a minimum standard code set would not impose any new requirements on Complete EHR and EHR Module developers nor would it require ONC-Authorized Testing and Certification Bodies (ONC-ATCBs) to test and certify Complete EHRs and EHR Modules to the newer version. Put simply, the purpose of this process is to provide a way to identify and approve acceptable newer versions of minimum standard code sets for voluntary use and permitted testing and certification.

Responsibility of the HIT Standards Committee

Prior to the Secretary’s acceptance of a newer version of a minimum standard code set, we identified that the National Coordinator would ask the HIT Standards Committee to:

- (1) Assess the new version(s);
- (2) Solicit public comment on the new version(s); and
- (3) Issue a recommendation to the National Coordinator which would identify whether the Secretary’s acceptance of the newer version(s) would:
 - (a) Burden the HIT industry;
 - (b) Negatively affect interoperability; or

(c) Cause some other type of unintended consequence.

New Versions for Review and Recommendation

Consistent with the criteria and process outlined above, I ask that your committee review and provide a recommendation regarding the following new versions of adopted minimum standard code sets:

Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes (LOINC®) (§ 170.207(c))

Version 2.34 | Released December 29, 2010

Version 2.33 | Released December 2010

Version 2.32 | Released June 30, 2010

Version 2.31 | Released June 2010

Note: The last minimum standard code set version of LOINC the Secretary accepted was LOINC version 2.3 (which was included in the Standards and Certification Criteria final rule (75 FR 44599)).

CVX-Vaccines Administered (§ 170.207(e))

Version March 20, 2011 (1 vaccine)

Version February 14, 2011 (2 vaccines)

Version September 30, 2010 (25 vaccines)

Version August 31, 2010 (1 vaccine)

Version August 28, 2010 (4 vaccines)

Version August 20, 2010 (1 vaccine)

Version May 28, 2010 (107 vaccines)

Note: The last minimum standard code set version of CVX the Secretary accepted was the version issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on March 17, 2010 (which was included in the Standards and Certification Criteria final rule (75 FR 44599)). The CDC previously updated all vaccines concurrently, but since the code set version of CVX accepted by Secretary in the Standards and Certification Criteria final rule the CDC has implemented a process of periodically updating vaccine codes individually or by groups of vaccines.