SNOMED CT
Release Format 2

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SNOMED CT Release Format 2

This talk will cover:

- An overview of the benefits of RF2.

- Documents within the RF2 specification.

- Elements of the RF2 release structure.

- Timescales for migration of the International Release.

- What this means for National Release Centres, and next steps.

Examples of Benefits resulting from RF2

Benefits of RF2 include:

- Consistent history representation across all components in RF2.

- Consistent representation of allowable values for component characteristics

- Consistent means of extending component data structures to meet future requirements without modification to the existing table structures.

Consistent History Representation

Three types of releases will be produced:

A "**full**" release of each file containing every version of every component ever released

A "**snapshot**" release, containing only the most recent version of every component ever released.

A "**delta**" release, containing only component versions created since the last release. These component versions may represent a new component or a change to an existing component.

Example Concept file records from a "**full**" release are shown below:

Id	effectiveTime	Active	moduleId	definitionStatusId
101291009	20070731	1	|Module 1|	|Primitive|
101291009	20080131	1	|Module 2|	|Primitive|
101291009	20080731	1	|Module 2|	|Fully defined|
101291009	20090131	0	|Module 2|	|Fully defined|

Consistent representation of values

- Concept enumerations have been used across RF2 to replace integer enumerations that can only be understood by referencing external documentation.

- For example, the values in the RF1 DefinitionStateId and DescriptionType fields have been changed as shown.

- This improves readability and enables greater automation.

DefinitionStateId

RF1 values	RF2 values
0	|Defined|
1	|Primitive|

DescriptionType

RF1 values	RF2 values
3	|Fully Specified Name|
2	|Synonym|

The RF2 extensibility mechanism

- Reference sets provide the foundation for RF2's generic extensibility mechanism.

- They allow extension owners to build on SNOMED CT.

- They enable the release format to support changing requirements.

- Each member within a reference set refers to a SNOMED CT component, but may also include one or more additional user-defined fields.

- Each reference set follows a pattern, which provides a level of consistency and enables easier definition.

- The format of data fields held within references sets is held in a machine readable form within a Descriptor.

Other benefits of RF2

- Consistent non-centralized means of loosely coupled identifier assignment for components.

- Addition of a module identifier field to all components, enabling the source module in which each component is maintained to be identified, facilitating configuration management.

- Addition of a description logic modifier concept enumeration to the Relationship file to represent different Description Logic relationship types, for example - some, all, all-some, not-some etc.

- Greater flexibility in meeting future requirements.

- More explicit and comprehensive version control.

- New features for configuration management.

- Reduced complexity of file structures – no need for separate references file, or corss map files.

- Reduced need for further fundamental change to the file structures in the foreseeable future.

Documents in the specification

Three core documents:

- Data Structures Specification

- Reference set Specifications

- Update Guide

Two auxiliary documents

- Quality Review Plan

- Feedback log

Elements in an RF2 Release

The following files are included in an RF2 release:

- Concept file

- Relationship file

- Description file

- Identifier file

- Reference set files

Timescales for migration

Timescales for the migration of the International Release are as follows:

- January 2010 release – RF1 released; RF2 issued as DFTU (Draft for Trial use).

- July 2010 release – RF1 and RF2 released.

- January 2011 release – RF1 and RF2 released.

- July 2011 onwards – RF2 only released.

Next Steps

- IHTSDO has written to all MF members, proving information about RF2 migration plans together with likely implications for NRCs, asking about each NRCs migration plans and requirements.

- We need to understand whether:
  - The timelines for migration of the International release may cause NRCs and/or their Affiliates issues.
  - Whether tools are required to assist with migration, and if so, should these tools be provided centrally.

- It is important an indicative response be returned early (7th May), with an updated response returned during June/July, if necessary.

Timelines for Next Steps

- IHTSDO letter to NRCs – April 2010

- NRC discussions with affiliates – during 2010

- NRC initial response to questions – 7th May, 2010

- Complete RF2 post-DFTU review – May, 2010

- Issue RF2 as approved standard – June, 2010

- NRC updated responses to questions – June/July 2010

- NRC has defined plans to migrate to RF2 – July 2010