

WHO Releases ICD-11 Preview

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The World Health Organization (WHO) released ICD-11 in June 2018, 18 years after the launch of ICD-10. It has been hailed as a vast improvement and was released in a completely electronic format that should improve the agility and longevity of this revision. According to WHO, ICD-11 will be presented in May 2019 to the World Assembly with the intent of a January 2022 adoption date by Member States.¹ This advanced preview is intended to allow countries to plan for their own adaptations to the new version. The new 11th edition reflects advances in medicine and science, safety event capture, capture quality of care guidelines, and the use of traditional medicine. The intent was also to simplify the coding structure to meet electronic capture of diseases.

ICD-11 can accommodate multiple use cases and users in recording, reporting, and analyzing health information. According to WHO, ICD-11 includes:²

- Improved usability
- Updated scientific content
- Enabled coding of all clinical detail
- eHealth readiness
- Links to classifications and terminologies
- Multilingual support

One of the notable improvements includes the categorization of stroke, supporting its move from the circulatory diseases and into neurological diseases. For example, the ICD-10-CM code for Cerebral infarction, unspecified is I63.9 and the ICD-11 code for Cerebral infarction, unspecified is 8B11.5Z.

Another notable improvement is in the mental disorders section, where the codes have been simplified to allow for mental health condition coding by primary healthcare providers.³ This determination was made based on the continued scarcity of mental health specialists compared to the numbers needing mental healthcare. One specific example includes the reduction of diagnostic terms for post-traumatic stress disorder to allow for easier diagnosis. Additions have also been made to the mental health chapter, including codes to allow ICD tracking for gaming disorders.⁴ There are three codes for gaming disorder in ICD-11:

- 6C51.Z – Gaming disorder, unspecified
- 6C51.0 – Gaming disorder, predominantly online
- 6C51.1 – Gaming disorder, predominantly offline

One will also find that gender incongruence is no longer classified under mental disorders, but rather under sexual health conditions.

Other notable changes include enhancements to chapter content:

- Chapter 14: Diseases of the skin – Dermatitis
- Chapter 23: External causes of morbidity or mortality – level designation for land transportation to on- or off-road distinction at the second level, as well as the expansion of extension codes for extra detail under the exposure to and harmful effects of substances
- Chapter 24: Factors influencing health status or contact with health services – structural and terminological consistency of the chapter was improved.

In terms of chapter coding format differences, ICD-11 moves away from a single alphabetic character as the first character to a letter in the second position in order to distinguish ICD-11 codes from ICD-10. ICD-11 codes will also have four characters

(versus three in ICD-10) before the decimal point and also includes two levels of subcategories. The first character will now always be related to the chapter number. The codes range from 1A00.00 to ZZ9Z.ZZ in ICD-11. Multiple parenting is another new concept and is applicable when one disease can be classified in two different places. An example of this is lung cancer, which can be classified under malignant neoplasms or as a condition of the respiratory system. The following gives an example comparison of ICD-11 and ICD-10 code structure:

- ICD-10-CM: E05.90, Hyperthyroidism
- ICD-11: 5A02.Z, Hyperthyroidism

Several new chapters have also been added, bringing the total to 30 chapters. The new chapters include:

- Chapter 4 – Diseases of the Immune System
- Chapter 7 – Sleep-Wake Disorders
- Chapter 17 – Conditions Related to Sexual Health
- Chapter 20 – Developmental Anomalies (separated from Conditions Arising in the Perinatal Period)
- Chapter 25 – Codes for Special Purposes
- Chapter 26 – Traditional Medicine Conditions – Module 1
- Chapter V – Supplementary Section for Functioning Assessment
- Chapter X – Extension Codes (Johnson 2018)

ICD-11 categories have added short descriptions with a maximum of 100 words and a long definition labeled “additional information” that is without length restriction. See an example below:⁵

1B10 Tuberculosis of the respiratory system

Description: A disease of the respiratory tract caused by an infection with the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which has been confirmed by laboratory testing. This disease is characterized by chronic cough, and sputum production that may be hemorrhagic. Transmission is commonly by inhalation of infected respiratory secretions. Confirmation is by identification of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in clinical samples.

Additional Information: Respiratory tuberculosis is a bacterial infection by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex that includes *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, *Mycobacterium bovis*, *Mycobacterium africanum*, and *Mycobacterium canettii*, into pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchus, lung, or the other respiratory tracts. It can be transmitted by airborne spread. Respiratory tuberculosis presents the symptoms such as chronic cough, sputum production, or hemoptysis. Hoarseness, dysphonia, and dysphagia can arise if the upper airway is involved by tuberculosis. Respiratory tuberculosis is diagnosed by sputum smear microscopy and mycobacterial culture, or tissue biopsy. This category refers to respiratory tuberculosis that has been bacteriologically and histologically confirmed.

Finally, for morbidity, the definition of main diagnosis has changed to the reason for admission at the end of the stay for data and statistical capture worldwide.

When ICD-10-CM/PCS was implemented, the joke was, “There’s a code for that.” The World Health Organization shared 10 ICD-11 codes that we may not have known about:⁶

- PJ00 – Victim of lightning
- SJ3Z – Traditional medicine
- PD7Z – Being hit by spacecraft
- NE40 – Frostbite
- ND73.20 – Hairball in the stomach
- 6B24 – Hoarding disorder
- QC30 – Malingering
- QB90 – Contacting health services for ear piercing
- QE31 – Insufficient social welfare support
- QE41 – Problems associated with being in prison

Health information management professionals can begin the process of familiarizing themselves with the revisions by accessing the ICD-11 Coding Tool provided by WHO at https://icd.who.int/ct11_2018/icd11_mms/en/release#/. The tool works by searching the ICD-11 Mortality and Morbidity Statistics Linearization (MMS), which is equivalent to the ICD-10 Tabular List. The MMS is the Linearization that contains the alphanumeric codes. The version released does not include synonym or even index terms yet, but it does show parent classes, coded-for categories and any code-for child categories that sit underneath them, and inclusion and exclusion terms.

Notes

1. World Health Organization. "WHO releases new International Classification of Diseases (ICD 11)." June 18, 2018. [www.who.int/news-room/detail/17-06-2018-who-releases-new-international-classification-of-diseases-\(icd-11\)](http://www.who.int/news-room/detail/17-06-2018-who-releases-new-international-classification-of-diseases-(icd-11)).
2. World Health Organization. "Improvements." 2018. www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/.
3. World Health Organization. "ICD-11: Classifying disease to map the way we live and die." 2018. www.who.int/health-topics/international-classification-of-diseases.
4. Ibid.
5. Terron Cuadrado, Marta. "ICD-11: The 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases." August 3, 2018. <https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/wiki/display/EHSEMANTIC/ICD-11%3A+The+11th+Revision+of+the+International+Classification+of+Diseases>.
6. World Health Organization. "ICD-11: Classifying disease to map the way we live and die."

References

Johnson, Laurie. "ICD-11: Hurry Up and Wait." ICD10 Monitor. June 26, 2018. www.icd10monitor.com/icd-11-hurry-up-and-wait.

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