Removal of Morphology Codes from ICD-10 5th Edition

The World Health Organisation (WHO) International Classification of Diseases for Oncology (ICD-O) is a domain specific extension of the ICD for tumour diseases. This classification is widely used by Cancer Registration for coding the site (topography) and the histology (morphology) of the neoplasm, usually obtained from a histopathology report. The latest version, published by WHO, is the third edition known as ICD-O-3. In England the use of ICD-0-3 morphology codes is defined in the NHS Data Model and Dictionary (www.datadictionary.nhs.uk).

In the ICD-10 4th Edition the morphology of neoplasms, referenced in Volumes 1–3, is based upon an earlier version of ICD-O; the second edition (ICD-O-2). The ICD-O-2 morphology codes are not updated by WHO and therefore inconsistent with the current edition - ICD-O-3. In order to address this anomaly WHO have removed all morphology (histology) codes from Volumes 1-3 of the 5th Edition and provide a link in Volume 1 to a webpage containing the list of morphology codes for reference purposes.

The ICD-10 Chapter II Neoplasms (C00-D48) codes will continue to be provided in the ICD-10 5th Edition to code neoplasms.

The ICD-10 data file (codes and titles and metadata), to support NHS implementation of the classification and updates, has never included ICD-O-2 codes as these are not required for mandated Admitted Patient Care Commissioning Dataset flows in England.

With the removal of the morphology codes, coding instructions will be removed from the core standards training materials to align with the ICD-10 5th Edition. Training materials will instruct on how histological types should be used by the coder to be directed to the appropriate column in the Neoplasm Table. Additionally this aspect of the classification will no longer be required for assessment, examination and accreditation, from the September 2016 examination. All training materials and assessments will be updated in readiness for and to support implementation on 1 April 2016. The national clinical coding standards for ICD-10 will continue to contain standards on the use of the ICD-10 site (topography) codes in Chapter II Neoplasms.

All cross-maps and references to the ICD-O-2 codes will be removed from the SNOMED CT to ICD-10 5th Edition cross-map data files for the April 2016 release. For legacy terminology Read V3 (CTV3) all cross-maps and references to ICD-O-2 will be removed for the final April 2016 release. For legacy terminology Read V2 all cross-maps and references to the ICD-O-2 will remain static for the final April 2016 release.
Where there are existing local requirements and systems enabled to collect the morphology using the ICD-O-2 codes provided in the ICD-10 4th edition, local policy owners/Information managers will need to review local arrangements and advise their clinical coding department. The Clinical Classifications Service recommends that Senior Responsible Owners contact their regional National Cancer Registration Service (NCRS) in England or their counterparts in the home countries, as part of any review.

Trusts wishing to record morphology of neoplasm codes to identify the histological type of the neoplasm can continue to do so, but should use the full ICD-O classification to assign the morphology code only. Topography (site) codes must continue to be assigned using ICD-10 codes in chapter II Neoplasms (C00-D48). For guidance on the use of ICD-O, coders may wish to seek advice from their regional National Cancer Registration Service. For more information on the United Kingdom and Ireland Association of Cancer Registries, see http://www.ukiacr.org/.