SNOMED CT – GP Practices Are You Prepared?

SNOMED CT is the clinical terminology chosen to replace Read codes within the NHS. Coded information that is currently received from GP systems is in Read codes; this will change to SNOMED CT. Implementation is scheduled in England from April 2018 in General Practice in a phased approach.

GP practices should now be preparing for SNOMED CT......

Dual Coding

- Existing data will be stored with its originally entered Read code and will also have an equivalent SNOMED CT term. New data captured using SNOMED CT, for a limited transition period, will also have an equivalent READ code provided by the system.

- Dual coding will give GP practices more time to transition; existing searches, templates and business rules/protocols etc will continue to work while dual coding is available. This will give users more time to update these as needed.

- There are significantly more SNOMED CT codes than Read codes, so over time it is recommended users review, amend or create their searches to reflect the greater choice of codes. Also, some codes may move positions in the SNOMED CT hierarchy, which could affect search results. However, it is expected the effect to be minimal, usually reflecting cases where the Read code hierarchy was incorrect.