Organisation Reference Data (ORD) Changes Project

How To: Understand Relationship meta data – how it works, names and definitions

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Relationships are used to link organisation entities together. These can imply genuine operational links indicating commissioning or provision, lines of authority or virtual geographical associations.

Relationships – How it works

- Any organisation record can be linked to one or more others via relationships.
- There is no rigid hierarchy within the model (i.e. any record may be linked to any other record)
- The different sides of a Relationship are termed ‘Subject’ (the record that holds the relationship reference) and ‘Target’ (the related Organisation that is referenced)
- Relationships are ‘one-way’ – that is, they are only hosted by one of the entities in the pairing
- There is no restriction on the number of times a record may be referenced as a Target from other Subject records.

Relationship information is contained in an element tagged ‘Rels’ in the Organisation component of the XML file. Within this element will be one or more elements tagged ‘Rel’, each of which contain the details of one of the Relationships for the Subject entity. Each of these Relationships will include a unique identifier, a name to give context, status and a timespan, as well as a range of information about the target entity including its own identifier.
# Relationship Names

Relationships are categorised with a Named Relationship value that indicates a context for the Relationship. There are 6 at present but more may be added in future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rel ID</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role Name</td>
<td>Named Relationship</td>
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</table>
| RE1    | **Named Relationship:** HAS A LEGACY RELATIONSHIP TO  
**Short Description:** Historic data.  
**Definition:** A relationship existing in the data for which the original context is unknown. | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| RE2    | **Named Relationship:** IS A SUB-DIVISION OF  
**Short Description:** Department/Programme-to-Organisation/Site  
**Definition:** The Organisation of which the subject entity forms a sub-division or component (such as a department or programme of work). | NHS ENGLAND (REGION, LOCAL OFFICE) | IS A SUB-DIVISION OF | NHS ENGLAND (REGION) |
| RE3    | **Named Relationship:** IS DIRECTED BY  
**Short Description:** Influenced or directed through policy.  
**Definition:** The primary Organisation by which the subject entity is influenced or directed, through policy, legal authority or contractual agreements. | PATHOLOGY LAB | IS DIRECTED BY | NHS TRUST |
| RE4    | **Named Relationship:** IS COMMISSIONED BY  
**Short Description:** Provider-to-Commissioner  
**Definition:** An Organisation commissioning health care or related services from the subject entity. | PRESCRIBING COST CENTRE | IS COMMISSIONED BY | CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP |
| RE5    | **Named Relationship:** IS LOCATED IN THE GEOGRAPHY OF  
**Short Description:** Geographical aggregator.  
**Definition:** An administrative geography, organisation or subdivision of an organisation, within the boundary of which the subject entity is physically located. Supplied for aggregation purposes only. *e.g. Fields 3 and 4 in current files.* | INDEPENDENT SECTOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER | IS LOCATED IN THE GEOGRAPHY OF | NHS ENGLAND (REGION, LOCAL OFFICE) |
### Further Information

Relationship names are defined and maintained within the Data Item Catalogue, and further information regarding how the Relationships Component works within the XML can be found within section 9 of the Technical Specification.

Both the Technical Specification and the Data Item Catalogue are published on the [ODS XML web pages](https://ods.nhs.uk) or within the XML Supporting Products pack on [TRUD](https://ods.nhs.uk).