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**Title:**           **Beyond membership of the World Health Organization Family of  
International Classifications**

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**Purpose:**         for discussion

**Recommendations:**

- That members of the Family Development Committee discuss processes for engaging with stewards of related and derived classifications following acceptance in the WHO-FIC.

**Abstract:**

Once a classification has been accepted as a member of the WHO Family of International Classifications the continuing relationship with the stewards of related and derived classifications needs to be considered. This paper presents a number of issues that need to be resolved to clarify the relationships between the Network and the stewards of classifications in the Family.

## **Beyond membership of the World Health Organization Family of International Classifications**

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### **Background**

In 2003 four classifications were accepted as related members of the World Health Organization Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC). These are:

- Anatomical Therapeutic Chemicals Classification (ATC/DDD)<sup>1</sup>;
- Technical aids for persons with disabilities: Classification and terminology (ISO9999)<sup>2</sup>;
- International Classification of Primary Care (ICPC-2); and the
- International Classification of External Causes of Injury (ICECI),

The Stewardship of the reference classifications, ICD and ICF is with the Classifications and Terminologies team at WHO Headquarters. The collaborating centre for drugs in Oslo, Norway is responsible for the ATC/DDD. The stewards for ICPC-2, ISO9999 and ICECI are Wonca, the World Organization of Family Doctors, the International Organization for Standardization, Technical Committee ISO/TC 173. SC 2 and the ICECI Coordination and Development Group respectively. The continuing relationship with the stewards of related classifications needs to be considered.

Derived classifications include:

- International Classification of Diseases for Oncology (ICD-O-3);
- Application of the International Classification of Diseases to Dentistry and Stomatology, 3rd Edition (ICD-DA);
- ICD-10 for Mental and Behavioural Disorders;
- Application of the International Classification of Diseases to Neurology (ICD-10-NA); and the
- International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health for Children and Youth (ICF-CY).

Processes for engaging the Stewards of these classifications in the different specialty areas of WHO Headquarters and academic and professional institutions also need to be established.

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<sup>1</sup> WHO Collaborating Centre for Drug Statistics Methodology. Guidelines for ATC classification and DDD assignment 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Oslo: Norwegian Institute of Public Health. 2003.

The revision of ICD-10 provides an opportunity for establishing or re-establishing relationships between the WHO-FIC Network and the Stewards of new classifications in the Family.

There may need to be different processes for different situations, the principles should be consistent.

## Issues

The following issues have been identified.

- 1 What should be the content of a letter making an announcement of the Network meeting decision to accept a related or derived classification into the WHO-FIC?
  - Acknowledgement that the classification has been endorsed by Heads of Collaborating Centres as a member of the WHO-FIC.
  - Invitation to join the WHO-FIC Network and send representatives to Network meetings.
  - Indication of the processes for maintaining classifications and the goal of increased use of a standard set of classification products around the world.
  - Indication of the need to increase the harmonisation between members of the WHO-FIC and how this will be managed.
  
- 2 Who should write the letter to the Steward organization?

In the first instance the Chair of the FDC should inform the Steward organisation of the Network meeting decision. More 'official' WHO commitment may be appropriate.

- 3 Following acceptance of membership should confirmation of stewardship responsibilities be by letter or contract?

Where possible stewardship responsibilities should be agreed by letter with the owner of a classification admitted to the WHO-FIC. This may be done by a WHO-FIC Network member unless formal arrangements between WHO and the Network member are required.

- 4 How should the quality of related and derived members be maintained?

There is a need to ensure that related and derived classifications are being maintained in line with the principles accorded by WHO-FIC member status. The revision of ICD-10 will require transfer of information to the Stewards of all classifications in the Family, engagement of the Stewards in evaluating the effect of proposed changes to the ICD-10 on their classification and seeking the advice from Stewards to inform the changes to ICD-10. This process should lead to increased harmonisation of all Family members.

## 5 Maintenance of the WHO-FIC

To date the Update Reference Committee and the Mortality Reference Group have been instrumental in managing the maintenance and updating of ICD-10. An update process for ICF has not been considered, though the Network is developing a means for collecting information for updates when the time arises. The Stewards of the related classifications each have their own processes for updating their respective classifications.

The respective stewards are responsible for updating and maintaining the derived classifications. WHO needs an internal process for ensuring that the Stewards of derived classifications are kept informed of updates to the ICD-10.

## 6 How should related/derived classifications represent their WHO-FIC membership?

Stewards of related classifications should be able to use the WHO logo as part of the naming of their classifications

A uniform statement about the relationship between related and derived classifications and the WHO reference classifications should be developed so that Stewards of related and derived classifications are consistent in the way they represent membership of the WHO-FIC.

## 7 Availability of WHO-FIC member classifications

Classifications within the WHO-FIC should be accessible to the broadest possible cross-section of interested bodies. It is preferable to make classifications easily available in the public domain by publishing in a number of formats and making it available on the Internet.

The Network recognises the need for the classifications to be available:

- at low cost for developing countries
- for translation at minimal cost
- in a variety of formats to make classifications more readily available to a range of users.

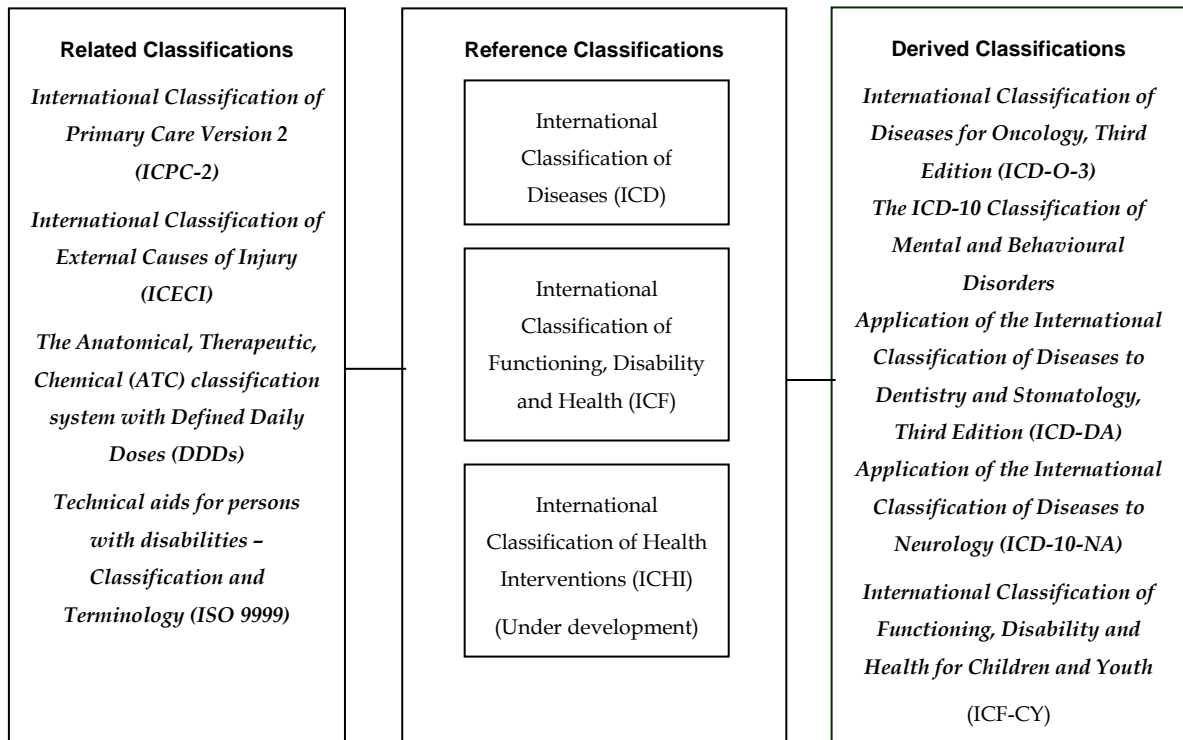
The Network should engage with Stewards of related classifications, to inform of the WHO-FIC expectations regarding access, and to assist with whatever issues arise.

## 8 How should the website information refer to the related and derived classifications?

The new WHO website includes a schematic representation of the WHO-FIC (see below). This indicates the relationship between the reference classifications and the related and derived classifications. The matrix is included in the Family of Classifications: definitions, scope and purpose paper. This paper will be available on the classifications pages of the new WHO website. The interactive electronic matrix, which shows the areas of application of the Family members

as well as the relationships between the reference classifications and the other members, is available for inclusion on the website.

**Schematic representation of the WHO Family of International Classifications**



There are separate pages for related classifications and for derived classifications. These connect to 'administrative records' for each classification. The basic information on these pages is provided by the Stewards and includes links to the Stewards web address.

- 9 What resources will be required to manage these processes and where will they be sourced?