

ICF Update

In the first half of 2010 there have been a large number of enquiries to WCPT seeking information on application of ICF. Members of the WCPT network for ICF have been supportive of each other. Many thanks to those of you who have offered to share your experiences.

If you have a question or have come across an application of ICF, or a resource that you think might interest others please post it on the ICF forum on the WCPT website.

You can register on the WCPT website and on the forum and receive an email notification when the ICF pages are changed or new posts made to the forum. I can assure you your mail box will not be filled.

ICF and ICD

A small group of ICF experts met in Geneva in January to consider the contribution ICF can make to the revision of the ICD. ICD – the International Statistical Classification of Diseases is now in its 10th edition. An 11th edition is under development. Unlike earlier versions the 11th edition of ICD will include definitions and other contextual information as well as the code and name for a disease. To learn more you can view a 7minutes presentation on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sx7RkiVU8Dg>

ICF web education

Pilot testing of the introductory module of the WHO web based education on ICF took place between 1 March and 31 July 2010. The introductory module is the first of several modules introducing the ICF and the children and youth version (ICF-CY) and ways it can be used across a variety of sectors including disability, health, education and statistics.

The module will be revised over the next few weeks with the view to launching the final product at the meeting of the WHO and its network for the family of international classifications in Toronto in October. To view the pilot module visit <http://p.ideaday.de/104.2/icf/>.

G-I-N

The Guidelines International Network (G-I-N) is an international effort to improve patient care through the development and implementation of clinical practice guidelines. The G-I-N aims to be a network for all health care professions. G-I-N recently started an Allied Health Community to promote multidisciplinary collaboration in clinical guideline development. One of the projects of the Allied Health Community is to develop a position paper to integrate patient functioning and quality of life in clinical guidelines, using the International Classification of Functioning (ICF). Philip Van der Wees a physical therapist from the Netherlands is leading the steering

group. For more information about the Allied Health Community go to <http://www.g-i-n.net/activities/allied-health-professionals-community>

Procedural manual

One barrier to use of the ICF might be any one group or individual's struggle with resolving some of the issues/ contradictions in the red book. As a starting point to resolving some of the issues the American Psychological Association (APA) has worked with several professional associations in the United States, including the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) to develop a clinical procedural manual to provide guidance¹.

The procedural manual documents recommendations and proposed solutions to applying each ICF category. The recommendations need to be tested in practice. Users should consider whether the recommendations are right for their particular situations. Feedback to the APA can be provided online.

ICF Knowledge Sharing Collaborative

In March 2010 a group of people from around Canada met to share information on their ICF application efforts and consider the future of ICF in Canada. A summary report from this meeting is available on the [Canadian Institute of Health Information](http://www.cihi.ca) website. Descriptions of how the ICF has been applied in different settings in Canada are included. Many of these applications have been either led by physical therapists or involved physical therapists in the development.

Latin American and Caribbean Network on use of ICF

The Latin American and Caribbean Network on use of ICF will be meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina Nov 2010. For further information you can contact Ms. Karina Riverol at kriverol7@hotmail.com. A copy of the provisional programme is available at www.wcpt.org/sites/wcpt.org/files/files/GH-ICF-LatinAmerican_and_CaribbeanNetwork-programme-Nov2010.pdf

The WHO Functioning and Disability Reference Group

The WHO Functioning and Disability Reference Group met in June to progress work on the global implementation of the ICF. This was preceded by a meeting of the ICF Network in Spain. Armando Vasquez from the Pan American Health Organization shared information on the implementation of the ICF in disability eligibility; Latin America has been leading the way in

¹ American Psychological Association. (2010). Procedural manual and guide for standardized application of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF): A manual for health professionals. Unpublished manuscript. <http://icf.apa.org>

using the ICF in this regard. Speakers from Spain also shared their experiences. Slides from this meeting will be made available in due course. Key items on the FDRG agenda were:

The mechanism for updating the ICF. The web-based process has been successfully tested and will be opened for public access before the end of the year. This means that if you find an error in the classification, need a new code, would like to refine a definition, add inclusions or exclusions you will be able to submit an evidence based proposal online. The proposals will be reviewed by the system administrators before being open for discussion. On the basis of the evidence presented, by the original proposer and commentators, the FDRG will recommend, reject or refer the proposal for additional information. It is anticipated that the first updates, those that arose from the development of ICF-CY, will be considered at the FDRG meeting in October, 2010.

Education materials A suite of ICF education materials are due for completion in October 2010, including:

- ICF information sheet: a 2 page document outlining the purpose and uses of ICF for readers with no prior knowledge.
- ICF Overview: an 8 page document introducing the ICF in more detail. This has been developed to replace the out-dated introduction to the ICF on the WHO website.
- ICF web-education, introductory module: See above.

ICF content model and ontology: If the ICF is to remain viable in the 21st century with health information being digitised it needs to be machine readable. This means building ontology to organise the information within the classification. The necessary first steps and the tools available to assist with ontology building were introduced to participants. The need for ontology was explained in simple terms using the example of the term 'cell'. The human brain can identify through the context of the term whether 'cell' refers to a battery cell, a cell phone, a jail cell, an Excel cell or cell nucleus. If computers are to discriminate between these different meanings of a term a content model and ontology are required.

ICF conference

The North American Collaborating Centre held a two day conference on ICF in June 2010. The physical therapy profession was well represented on the programme by Anita Bemis-Dougherty, Diane Caulfeild, Alan Jette, Catherine Sykes and Daniel Vreeman, and amongst poster presenters by Alia Alghwiri et al, Kai-Yu Chu et al, Ai-Wen Wang et al, Catherine Sykes and Vivian Temple.

The programme is available for download at www.wcpt.org/sites/wcpt.org/files/files/GH-ICF-nacc-2010-final_program.pdf Slides will be added to the website <http://www.ncvhs.hhs.gov/icf/index.html> in due course.