

**WHO Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC)
and
International Federation of
Health Records Organizations (IFHRO)**



**WHO-FIC - IFHRO
JOINT COLLABORATION**

Dear Colleague,

The WHO Family of International Classifications (WHO-FIC) Collaborating Centres and the International Federation of Health Records Organizations (IFHRO) have been working together since 2000 to develop an international training and certification program for coders who use the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th revision (ICD-10). The overall goals of this program are to improve the quality of mortality and morbidity data and the status of ICD coders in WHO member countries.

In October 2004, the IFHRO General Assembly and the WHO-FIC Network endorsed the program, which includes

- an international standard ICD-10 curricula for the education and training of mortality (underlying cause of death) and morbidity coders,
- approved core modular training packages from multiple sources, and
- a methodology by which educators and trainers are approved as meeting an international standard.

We believe that identifying approved core modular training programs will result in more standardized training and better-trained coders. Approval of course content will give coders confidence that their coding education program meets the benchmarks set by the WHO-FIC Education Committee and IFHRO for a comprehensive understanding of coding principles and practices. Approval of educators will assist in ensuring good teaching and learning outcomes. Standardization will increase user confidence in the data for decision-making, resource allocation and health planning. It is also expected that this standardization will ultimately lead to improvement in the health of the world's population.

To further advance our work, we are inviting you to submit your training materials to us for assessment by the Joint Collaboration against the standard core curricula. The curricula are comprised of categories or knowledge clusters that represent broad domains of content. Each category contains specific content areas that training materials are expected to address. Existing materials may be relevant to only one of the knowledge clusters or more than one; however it is our intention that ultimately coders receive education relating to each of the knowledge clusters. The purpose of the core curricula is thus to provide a standardized basis for ICD coder education for all countries, thereby providing appropriate learning experiences that result in the development of the competencies necessary for entry-level coding practice. Although some individual countries have existing standard curricula and/or a credentialing

process in place, there is nothing available internationally. As you will see upon review, the curricula focus on the basic needs of all coders in an international context.

The Joint Collaboration is willing to accept training materials in the language in which they were originally developed. There is no need to translate any of existing materials prior to submission for evaluation. The Joint Collaboration intends to provide feedback to educators, institutions and training course providers to indicate whether their materials meet the international requirements or if we believe that some enhancements or modifications are needed to augment existing materials. Resubmission of materials once amendments have been made is encouraged.

We hope that you will join us to assist in attaining our objectives of ensuring that approved training materials are available for all aspects of the core curricula and that these packages are used by approved trainers or nationally recognized educational institutions when conducting ICD-10 education. By participating, we move closer to coded and classified health data that are consistent, of high quality, and comparable within and among WHO member states. Good quality, comparable data are needed to underpin management of health services and programs. High-quality data can also help best allocate scarce resources and get value for money from the health system.

To become a part of this important initiative, we ask that you do the following:

1. Review the standard curricula and complete a form for each set of training materials being submitted for review by the Joint Collaboration. We are initially focussed on soliciting information on ICD-10 Underlying Cause of Death coding training materials but are also interested in morbidity materials. We are interested in reviewing training modules available in multiple languages; however, we may be limited by the availability of qualified reviewers in some languages.
2. Submit the form and training modules to: American Health Information Management Association, Attention: Yvette Apura, 233 North Michigan Avenue, 21st Floor, Chicago, Illinois, 60601, USA.

Thank you for your willingness to assist us in our goals. We look forward to receiving your materials.

With best regards,



Sue Walker
Associate Director
National Centre for Classification in Health
Queensland University of Technology,
Kelvin Grove 4059 Queensland
Australia
Email: s.walker@qut.edu.au

Margaret A. Skurka MS, RHIA, CCS

Margaret Skurka
Professor and Director
Health Information Management Programs
Indiana University Northwest
3400 Broadway
Gary, Indiana 46408
USA
Email: mskurk@iun.edu