

North American Collaborating Center

ICF Newsletter

March, 2010

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Announcing the 2010 NACC ICF Conference in Bethesda, MD**](#)
Please join the North American Collaborating Center for its 2010 ICF Conference, hosted at the National Institutes of Health.

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NACC encourages you to submit a Poster Session Abstract about your current work using the ICF. Deadline: April 12, 2010.

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Please join in for the next offering of this popular, educational 3-part ICF Web Seminar Series: There is no charge to participate.

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We continue with ICF Coder's Corner, an educational feature to help you build and enhance your skills as an ICF Coder.
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- 1) ***Save the Dates: June 23-24, 2010
Announcing the 2010 NACC ICF Conference in Bethesda, MD***
Please join the North American Collaborating Center for its 2010 ICF Conference, hosted at the National Institutes of Health.

The North American Collaborating Center invites you to participate in the 2010 NACC ICF Conference, to be conducted on Wednesday and Thursday, June 23 and 24, 2010, on the campus of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, MD.

Since the mid-1990s, your North American Collaborating Center has sponsored a series of Conferences about the ICF and functional status classification, in both Canada and the U.S., and we are pleased to resume the ICF Conference series in 2010.

The theme for this year's NACC ICF Conference will be "Enhancing Our Understanding of the ICF."

This year, the format for the NACC ICF Conference will be a little different from that during our previous ICF Conferences, though.

First, this year we will only conduct a "Call for Poster Session Abstracts," rather than a call for abstracts for oral presentations of full-scale papers. We present the details about the Call for Poster Session Abstracts directly following this entry in this Newsletter. If you have an idea for a poster presentation about some of your current research or applications using the ICF, in Canada, the U.S., or around the world, or involving commentary about the ICF or the new ICF-CY, we welcome your submission. We hope you will accept our invitation: *Nous espérons que vous accepterez notre invitation!*

Second, in 2010 there will be no registration fee to attend the NACC ICF Conference. We want to encourage as many people as possible to attend the ICF Conference, and to minimize or eliminate the cost barriers that might preclude some from attending. Even

though it will be free to attend the 2010 NACC ICF Conference, we will ask everyone who would like to attend to pre-register on our ICF Conference website, so that we can plan accordingly.

Third, we invite you to participate in this year's NACC ICF Conference either in person in Bethesda, or via the Internet, as we are trying to arrange for a simultaneous NIH Videocast of portions of our ICF Conference proceedings, direct from our conference room in Bethesda. There will be no registration fee to attend, either in person in Bethesda, or to participate via the NIH Videocast.

Fourth, rather than hosting concurrent or "breakout" sessions, during this year's NACC ICF Conference we will host only plenary sessions, for oral presentations from our invited speakers.

With these changes to our ICF Conference format, your NACC is sponsoring this year's event to achieve the following Objectives:

- To review and accentuate current debates about the degree to which ICF can be applied in specific disciplines, such as in the Rehabilitation Sciences;
- To raise awareness about the alignment of ICF coding with current health informatics initiatives;
- To provide an educational opportunity to learn about basic and applied ICF coding, in addition to but distinct from the familiar ICF conceptual framework; and
- To enable enhanced sharing of resources regarding ICF applications between and among American and Canadian scientists and government agencies.

Watch for our 2010 NACC ICF Conference website soon, which will be announced through the NACC ICF List Serve on which you receive this ICF Newsletter. We encourage you to attend the 2010

NACC ICF Conference in person in Bethesda, or participate via the planned videocast. More details will follow in this ICF Newsletter.

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2) *Call for Poster Session Abstracts: 2010 NACC ICF Conference*
NACC encourages you to submit a Poster Session Abstract about your current work using the ICF. Deadline: April 12, 2010.

The North American Collaborating Center is currently accepting Abstracts for posters related to utilizing the ICF in any way in North America, for in-person presentation during the 2010 NACC ICF Conference in Bethesda, MD. Watch for a NACC 2010 ICF Conference website soon, where you can submit your abstract electronically.

Suggested Poster Session Topical Themes

Although anyone can submit a Poster Session abstract on any ICF-oriented topic, we have prepared the following topical roster to encourage Poster Session authors to focus on these suggestions.

- Applications of ICF or ICF-CY in health systems or clinical practice around the world;
- ICF Across the Life Span: From Pediatrics to Gerontology;
- Early Research Using New Codes From the ICF-CY;
- Using ICF Among Members of Special Populations;
- Teaching About ICF Coding; and
- The Complementary Relationship Between, and the Joint Use of, the ICF and ICD.

During the ICF Conference in Bethesda, MD, on June 23-24, NACC will feature an in-person Poster Session with brief oral presentations by selected poster authors. But all authors of accepted

posters will be encouraged to join the ICF Conference, during which all accepted posters will be displayed in a conventional poster-viewing area. The organizers also are considering a prize for a poster selected by the participants. Welcome, everyone!

Point of Contact: John Hough, jph7@cdc.gov .

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3) ***Mark the Dates: June 8, 9, and 10, 2010
Announcing the next NACC ICF Web Seminar Series***

Please join in for the next offering of this popular, educational 3-part ICF Web Seminar Series: There is no charge to participate.

The North American Collaborating Center announces the next offering of its popular three-day "ICF Web Seminar Series," on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, June 8, 9, and 10, 2010.

This popular 3-part series features 90-minute live Web Seminars about the ICF and ICF coding on three consecutive weekdays, in the early afternoon Eastern Time.

Everyone is welcome to participate, and there is no registration fee or any charge to gain a "seat" in the electronic environment in which we present the ICF Web Seminar Series. Neither is there any need to register in advance. To keep the Seminars at a manageable size, though, we maintain a maximum number of 50 simultaneous participants logging-on during any Seminar.

This Web Seminar Series emphasizes applying the ICF, and understanding the basics of ICF coding, with many coding examples.

There are no prerequisites. Persons with all levels of familiarity about the ICF are welcome. All types of questions and comments are welcome, too, from beginners and advanced-level ICF users alike.

Anyone in the U.S., Canada, or the Caribbean can participate, using our password-protected Internet websites shown below, and a conventional audio telephone conference calling set-up over our toll-free telephone line.

(Interested persons outside the U.S., Canada or the Caribbean can also participate, but without a toll-free telephone connection. You would be able to hear the Seminar and discussion among other participants using your computer's Internet connection. You would also be able to submit questions or comments electronically in writing. However, there will not be any telephone service associated with the Seminars for persons outside North America, and two-way voice communication over the computer connection is not feasible.)

You can attend one, two, or all three of the Web Seminars. The downloadable Handouts will be available during and after each Seminar as .PDF documents.

The format of the NACC ICF Web Seminar Series provides a lot of time for discussion. Bring all your questions about the ICF and ICF coding, whether they are simple or complicated.

NACC conducts the Web Seminars in English, in real-time. Archived recording versions will be available for one year following the live Web Seminars. Neither captioning nor sign language interpretation are available, however.

ICF Web Seminar Schedule

Part 1: "An Introduction to the ICF"

Tuesday, June 8, 2010

1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

Part 2: "ICF Coding"
Wednesday, June 9, 2010
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

Part 3: "Frequently Asked and Answered Questions About the ICF"
Thursday, June 10, 2010
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

ICF Web Seminar Series Log-On Information

The Internet log-on websites, the toll-free telephone dial-in number for the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean, and the Participant Passcodes for the NACC ICF Web Seminars are as follows:

Tuesday, June 8, 2010 Part 1
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. EDT
<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/cdc/join?id=TQ2F55&role=attend>
Meeting ID: TQ2F55
Toll-free telephone: (866) 600-3750
Participant Code: 5217668 followed by the # sign

Wednesday, June 9, 2010 Part 2
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. EDT
<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/cdc/join?id=C4M2RM&role=attend>
Meeting ID: C4M2RM
Toll-free telephone: (866) 600-3750
Participant Code: 5217668 followed by the # sign

Thursday, June 10, 2010 Part 3
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. EDT
<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/cdc/join?id=HPDJ8J&role=attend>
Meeting ID: HPDJ8J
Toll-free telephone: (866) 600-3750
Participant Code: 5217668 followed by the # sign

[Test Your Computer System Before the ICF Web Seminar Series](#)

To attend a Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007 Net Conference, you will need to install a free Microsoft Office 2007 user Add-In, unless you had already installed Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007 from a previously-conducted Net Conference using this particular software. It is easy, quick, safe for your computer, and free of charge.

Please note: Other Internet seminar or on-line meeting software products (for example, WebEx, GoToMeeting, Webmeeting 123, etc.) that had been previously installed on your computer system operate independently from, and usually are not compatible with, the Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007 product.

To make sure your computer system is compatible with Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007, before the ICF Web Seminar Series, please try to download the free Live Meeting 2007 Add-In. Then, test your system. Follow these instructions.

- First, download the Microsoft Office Live Meeting 2007 Add-In, at the following Microsoft web page.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA101733831033.aspx>

- You will need to “Accept” the terms expressed on that Microsoft web page. Click on "Accept Terms and Install Client."
- Please note that if your computer is in a networked or “fire-walled” environment, you might need to obtain your System Administrator’s permission before downloading this Add-In. That might characterize your computer environment if you are in a government agency, university, or corporate networked environment. Allow for some extra time to arrange for that permission and downloading, using these instructions.

- After installing the Add-In, test your system's compatibility for participating in any Microsoft Office Live Meeting. Visit this Microsoft web page, entitled "How to test your computer for compatibility with Live Meeting 2007":

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/883749>
- [Follow the link on that web page](#), and click "Allow" to enable your computer to run the upcoming web site content. You should have a screen with text reading "You are now connecting to the meeting." Then click "Continue" if you accept the terms about recordings during meetings. Be patient; this browser test might not produce your results immediately.
- You should have a screen indicating "You are now connecting to the meeting." If the test is successful, shortly you should have a Microsoft Office Live Meeting screen with scrolling text in 8 languages. The English and French texts read as follows:

"You have successfully connected to Live Meeting."
« Vous vous êtes connecté avec succès à Live Meeting. »

"To connect to your meeting please refer to your meeting invitation information."
« Pour vous connecter à votre reunion, veuillez consulter les informations indiquées dans votre invitation à la reunion. »
- To exit this browser test, on the toolbar in the upper left, click on "Meeting," and then click "Exit." You are now ready to attend the ICF Web Seminar Series!

Point of Contact: John Hough, jph7@cdc.gov .

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4) Welcome to "Coder's Corner"

Welcome back to ICF Coder's Corner, a continuing feature in our NACC ICF Newsletter. Coder's Corner is where we present illustrations appended with ICF coding, to demonstrate the four domains in ICF, and the basic principles of the ICF coding structure. Our goal is to enable each Reader to build and enhance his or her skills as a full-fledged ICF Coder.

We began Coder's Corner [in an earlier edition of this ICF Newsletter](#), incorporating color photographs or generic clip art representing people with disabilities engaged in everyday activities. Students of ICF coding have mentioned that learning about codes and rules can be easier when illustrations accompany the actual ICF codes, in addition to text.

An important characteristic of Coder's Corner is the respectfulness with which we approach any given coding example. Even in the abstract, we acknowledge that our coding examples refer to or portray real people who have serious impairments or genuine participation restrictions. We want to see the person first, not the disability. Our goal is not to accentuate impairments, but to demonstrate that the ICF provides standardization to the description of such cases, by adhering to the ICF coding guidelines. Therefore we approach each example in a non-stigmatizing, humanistic, respectful manner, and we encourage our Readers to do the same.

In each coding example we present a brief description of the image, one or more representative ICF codes that describe the case in the image, a justification for selecting those ICF codes, and a short discussion.

Some of our coding examples are simple, others are complex. A few don't even involve people *per se*, for example in an illustration describing an environmental barrier or facilitator. Some of our coding examples utilize ICF qualifiers, while others do not, and are simply at the code stem level.

We thank [the Center for Universal Design at the North Carolina State University](#) in Raleigh, North Carolina, for contributing the six photographs we've adapted for ICF instructional purposes in this Newsletter issue. The source of these photos is [the Public Health Image Library](#), provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, whom we also thank.



Activities & Participation

d4608 Moving around in different locations,
 other specified

d9208 Recreation and leisure, other specified

Environmental Factors

e1603+4 Products and technology of parks,
 conservation, and wildlife areas, Complete
 Facilitator

Description of the Image

We thank the CDC Public Health Image Library for this outstanding photograph of a gentleman using a wheelchair; it is copyrighted PHIL photo # 9082. He's also apparently enjoying a camping adventure, as it appears he is near his own domed tent in a campsite in an outdoor campground.

It looks to have been a warm day, as he is wearing short pants. For his benefit, this particular campsite appears to be adapted for use by "wheelchair-campers." What a wonderful adaptation! Camping and being out in nature (during clement weather, of course) can be an enjoyable, inspirational set of activities, for both users and nonusers of wheelchairs.

There is a wooden log retaining wall just in front of the zippered door to the domed tent. It is about one-half meter (~ 19 inches) in height, or roughly at the wheelchair-seat level. This enables our wheelchair-camper to transfer into and out of his chair and the inside of the tent, where he would sleep. This adapted wall minimized his effort needed to transfer. In ICF terms, that represents an Environmental Facilitator, which enhances his *performance* of the *activities* represented in our selected Activities & Participation codes, discussed below.

The retaining wall also is at a good height for others to sit, or to transfer gear into the tent, suitable for both users and nonusers of wheelchairs. At that height, all campers can communicate with each other at eye-level, too, enjoying their company in the great outdoors.

The Center for Universal Design wrote in the accompanying text for this PHIL image, "Designing recreation sites with the mobility-challenged in mind makes for an overall more user-friendly environment for all, and is quite often made even more efficient from a utilitarian standpoint."

This adaptation involved natural construction, rather than expensive retrofitting, or the design and construction of asphalt lanes and ramps (which might be much less aesthetically pleasing at this campsite anyway). Those types of retrofits might be necessary, though, to develop and maintain accessible washroom facilities, and accessible vehicular routing.

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

Actually, this is a relatively easy scenario to code. We have a handsome gentleman enjoying an interesting activity with easily interpreted adaptations, which in ICF terms are Environmental Facilitators.

In Activities & Participation, we selected **d4608**, for “Moving around in different locations, other specified.” It is from A&P Chapter 4, “Mobility,” and pertains to his use of the wheelchair for his mobility. We might have also selected **d465**, for “Moving around using equipment,” which would have been suitable, too, but more descriptive of the chair itself than the interesting setting. Code **d4608** is slightly more specific, and to make that determination, it was helpful to use a process of elimination among neighboring ICF codes, which might not include a setting like this campsite.

Under two-level heading (i.e., one letter and three digits) **d460**, code **d4600** pertains to moving around within the home; **d4601** is for moving around within buildings other than home; and **d4602** is for moving around outside the home and other buildings. None of them are a perfect fit, although **d4602** comes closest.

But this gives us the opportunity to utilize one of the many “Other Specified” codes in ICF. The Other Specified and Unspecified codes are not always the ICF Coder’s friend, because they add more inputs to a discrimination task that isn’t always straightforward. As in this case, sometimes they enable the Coder to summarize any situation with flexibility, even when existing codes ending in lower digits might not be exactly right. We can discern that our gentleman is at an actual campsite, so there are no buildings or transportation activities truly represented.

Therefore we selected **d4608** and in this case, the Other Specified code is truly the ICF Coder's friend!

We also selected **d9208**, for “Recreation and leisure, other specified.” The Recreation and Leisure codes (**d9200** to **d9209**) are great: explore them! They include sports, arts and culture, crafts, hobbies, and

socializing, all of which are important activities. The ICF-CY has added some wonderful Inclusions, too, such as “board games,” “hide and seek,” “dancing,” and “being read to,” and helpful Exclusions related to play-oriented new codes elsewhere in ICF-CY. In this scenario, though, “camping” can be interpreted as a sport, a hobby, and perhaps a craft and sometimes part of socializing. From an informal process of elimination, in this case, **d9208**, the Other Specified code under Recreation and Leisure, is most suitable, in our coding interpretation.

In Environmental Factors, we selected a code that is not used very often, but it is very descriptive here. From Environmental Factors Chapter 1, “Products and Technology,” we selected **e1603+4**, for “Products and technology of parks, conservation, and wildlife areas.” The ICF code definition for **e1603** is very helpful:

“Products and technology in land areas making up parks, conservation and wildlife areas, as they affect an individual’s outdoor environment through the implementation of land use policies and design, planning and development of space, such as park signage and wildlife trails.”

The last words, “wildlife trails,” are as close as we will get to the word or concept *camping* in ICF, but that’s fine. We might also choose the adjacent Other Specified code, **e1608**, and specify the area as an adapted campsite, so either of these codes would be fine.

We also judged that the degree of environmental facilitation provided by these campsite adaptations is Complete. Not only can our wheelchair camper utilize the park’s services and facilities, but apparently he also has appropriate access for his vehicle, such as an adapted van or automobile. But without the original land use planning having these adaptations in mind, the degree of facilitation might have been lower. The “**+4**” qualifier enables the Coder to summarize that a lot of facilitation had already been invested on a policy or land use level, as well as a lot of facilitation simply being provided by the log retaining wall at the campsite.

Discussion

This is a great scenario for ICF coding, and we thank the CUD and the PHIL for providing it. We also thank our gentleman model who posed for it. It provided us with opportunities to use infrequently-used ICF codes, and to discriminate between closely-related concepts. If we were to be able to enjoy a conversation with our wheelchair camper, we might learn that other adaptations in the campground might not have been so “universalizing” as this log retaining wall. But overall, let’s applaud the land-use planners and policy makers and park personnel who worked to develop and maintain this great adaptation.



Activities & Participation

d4601 Moving around within buildings other than home

Environmental Factors

e1502+1 Design, construction, and building products and technology for way finding, path routing, and designation of locations in buildings for public use, Mild Facilitator

Description of the Image

This photograph from the CUD and the PHIL (image # 9100) presents a common situation for wheelchair users, but in this case with a helpful adaptation. Arriving at the doctor's or other clinician's office often involves the necessity for checking in, or signing a register, in a lobby setting.

Having a disability does not mean a person has an illness and therefore needs to see the doctor more frequently, but we can agree that everyone should try to visit their clinician when necessary. Therefore "signing in" becomes a regular activity in which every person should be able to participate fully. Some clinical offices, though, are not well-suited for persons with mobility impairments or other types of disability.

In this photograph, though, it appears that the clinical office has made preparations and adaptations that render it much more suitable for a person using a wheelchair. The photograph shows a woman using a wheelchair signing into a register conveniently positioned at about the height of her forearms when seated. This enables her to sign in comfortably, without reaching or manipulating.

The Receptionist can greet her at the client's eye-level, too, making communication easy, quick, and respectful. There might or might not have been an actual adaptation or retrofitting for this Receptionist's receiving window. The visible space is at a suitable level that all people, including wheelchair users, can be accommodated comfortably.

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

To summarize this scenario, we selected codes from the Activities & Participation and Environmental Factors domains again. In Activities & Participation, we selected **d4601**, for "Moving around within buildings other than home," to represent the activities underway in this scenario.

A&P Chapter 4, "Mobility," provides some very helpfully descriptive codes, and this is one: it's distinguished from **d4600**, for "Moving around

within the home.” That distinction between “home” and “other than home” is helpful in the Environmental Factors domain, too, where it will be analogous to “buildings for private use” versus “buildings for public use.”

In this scenario, the mobility situation is defined clearly by the necessary activity of signing in at a clinician’s office. That makes it, in ICF terms, an activity that ordinarily transpires in a “building other than home.”

The mobility patterns associated with beginning these activities also define the situation, such as getting into the office door, and through a potential obstacle course of fixed chairs, other patients, and tables. This situation also affects patients with visual impairments, too, not just those with mobility impairments. Even the brown fixed chair in the foreground of this photograph could be a potential barrier. But we only have this two-dimensional photographic scene, and ICF guides us to code only observable phenomena.

In Environmental Factors, we selected **e1502+1**, for “Design, construction, and building products and technology for way finding, path routing, and designation of locations in buildings for public use, Mild Facilitator.” This code assignment summarizes the information that “design” or “construction,” represented here by the forearm-level platform and the lower-edge kiosk window, are facilitative in the tasks that ICF best describes as way finding in a public building. That’s a usefully specific code for our purposes.

The code definition for **e1502** is also very helpful. It reads in part:

“Indoor and outdoor products . . . for public use to assist people to find their way inside and immediately outside buildings and locate the places they want to go, such as signage, in Braille or writing, size of corridors, floor surfaces, *accessible kiosks*, and other forms of directories” (italics added).

The qualifier “+1” indicates that the degree of facilitation, though important, is relatively Mild. But without that mild facilitation, this woman’s performance of the activity of signing in would be diminished in some way. Another Coder might refer to it as Moderate or even Substantial facilitation,

represented by qualifiers “+2” and “+3” respectively. Another Coder might also specifically code the brown fixed chair in the foreground as a Barrier. That’s legitimate. Coder’s Judgment is used to determine how many ICF codes adequately describe a given case; we decided to use just two codes.

We also happen to know that this photograph is from a series of images in the PHIL featuring the same lovely female model who uses a wheelchair, all referring to the entry, egress, and way finding properties of a well-designed clinician’s office, in the Universal Design context. Different degrees of environmental facilitation are demonstrated in those other photographs, which Readers of this ICF Newsletter might find in a future edition of “Coder’s Corner”!

Discussion

We thank the models, both our wheelchair user and the Receptionist, for their roles in clarifying this set of important activities for our ICF coding purposes. We now know that the “everyday” activity of signing in, which among persons without mobility or visual impairments is considered easy, can incorporate environmental barriers that might diminish a person’s performance of that activity. In this case, generally we have environmental facilitation, not barriers. And the ICF distinction between “public” and “private” is very useful --- in two different domains, too, Activities & Participation and Environmental Factors. We think this demonstrates both the flexibility and, when necessary, the specificity that ICF coding provides.



Activities & Participation

d4103 Sitting

Environmental Factors

e1201+3 Assistive products and technology for
personal indoor and outdoor mobility and
transportation, Substantial Facilitator

Description of the Image

This photograph shows a lovely lady who apparently has a mobility impairment, utilizing a fixed “four-post” walker or standing device, to assist her in comfortably and independently getting seated in a fixed chair. It’s a transfer. In this case she is transferring from her standing or walking position, to the seated position in the chair.

This is adapted from PHIL image # 9146. We thank our model for posing for this very helpful photograph, from the vantage point of our instructional purposes in ICF coding.

In this photo we can more easily visualize how the activity of “sitting” is actually quite complex, especially for persons with, for example, balance problems, or weakness in their lower extremities. Sitting is not just comfortable, it is necessary and practical. In fact, in the accompanying series of CUD and PHIL images, all of which refer to mobility and transfers, this same lovely model begins to hold a little girl or granddaughter in her lap on this same fixed chair. So being seated for that subsequent activity would be very important as well!

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

We selected A&P and Environmental Factors codes again. In A&P, we assigned **d4103**, for “Sitting.” That is obviously a very precise four-level

ICF code. It is spot-on as a representation of this portrayed activity. But for learning purposes, let's point to its neighboring codes in the ICF.

Its three-level heading is **d410**, "Changing basic body positions," and all of the subsequent "child codes" represent important activities. They include Lying down (**d4100**), Squatting (**d4101**), Kneeling (**d4102**), Standing (**d4104**), Bending (**d4105**), Shifting the body's center of gravity (**d4106**), and the Other Specified and Unspecified cousin codes. Those are all helpfully distinguished from "Sitting," which is defined as:

"Getting into and out of a seated position and changing body position from sitting down to any other position, such as standing up or lying down."

All these codes are in Chapter 4, "Mobility," so they are all related to the supporting or component activities that comprise overall mobility.

We also selected Environmental Factors code **e1201+3**, for "Assistive products and technology for personal indoor and outdoor mobility and transportation, Substantial Facilitator," referring to her walker or standing device. Here, the walker helps our model perform the activity of sitting. At other times, the walker helps her perform the activity of "Walking."

In ICF terms, "An environment with barriers, or without facilitators, will restrict the individual's performance; other environments that are more facilitating will increase that performance" (2001; pg. 17). In this photo, the lady's environment includes the walker. The walker facilitates her performance of the activity of sitting. And the degree of facilitation provided by the walker is probably Substantial, summarized by the qualifier "**+3**". Another coder might legitimately judge it to be Moderate ("**+2**") or Complete ("**+4**") facilitation, pending more information about the woman's capacity for performing activities associated with sitting, or her mobility generally.

Discussion

This scenario presented another demonstration of the complex, but nevertheless discernible, interaction between a person's own environment,

and their level of performance of activities in that environment. There are physical, attitudinal, behavioral, social, and policy environments, all of which can be modified by environmental facilitators, such as products or technologies. In this case, our model's environment includes the assistive device of a walker, used for performing activities associated with personal mobility in indoor and outdoor settings, including transferring.



Activities & Participation

d4600 **Moving around within the home**

Environmental Factors

e1550+3 **Design, construction, and building products and technology for entering and exiting of buildings for private use, Substantial Facilitator**

Description of the Image

This photograph shows a young lady using a wheelchair in what appears to be a private home. She is on a level plane as she wheels onto

an entranceway to a front door of a residence. In the distance it appears that her way forward on the path is flat and smooth. The ICF Coder might judge that the model is moving from the exterior of the home, or perhaps from a porch or an area where vehicles are parked, making her way inside.

This photograph is adapted from PHIL image # 9166. We thank this lovely model, who also appears in a broad series of CUD and PHIL images related to home modifications for persons with mobility impairments.

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

This image presents us with Activities & Participation and Environmental Factors coding opportunities again. In A&P, we selected **d4600**, for “Moving around within the home.” Here the Inclusions are really helpful. ICF explains that **d4600** includes “moving from floor to floor, on an attached balcony, courtyard, porch or garden.” The last three terms in the Inclusions might pertain to this photograph.

This code comes from the series of ICF codes in A&P Chapter 4, “Mobility,” described above in our first Coder’s Corner example, involving the wheelchair camper. This series of ICF codes refers to the different locations in which one might be moving. The venues include inside the home, in buildings other than home, outside the home and other buildings, and Other Specified and Unspecified. Here, our choice is clear: our model appears to be at a residential home.

We also selected Environmental Factors code **e1550+3**, for “Design, construction, and building products and technology for entering and exiting of buildings for private use, Substantial Facilitator.” This code refers to the design and construction of the pathway, and its degree of facilitation in the model’s performance of the activities associated with “Moving around within the home.”

That pathway is on one level, and it is smooth but not slippery. The surface is ideal for a wheelchair user, even when wet. The degree of the pathway’s facilitation is Substantial, so we assigned qualifier “**+3**” to summarize that observation. The pathway might have been part of the

original construction, or an adaptation or retrofit specially designed for this woman's mobility.

Discussion

This example reinforces the observation that Universal Design concepts and construction strategies closely parallel the ICF Environmental Factors domain. In this photograph, the smooth, flat pathway is “user-friendly” for all users, whether they are walking or wheeling. It is facilitative for everyone. It is especially facilitative for persons who use wheelchairs.

The ICF Environmental Factors domain, supported by its Barrier and Facilitator qualifiers, is flexibly capable of capturing or summarizing the degree of facilitation for all users. For example, although we utilized qualifier “+3” for this photograph, genuinely reflecting the Substantial facilitation provided for this user by this pathway, we might use qualifier “+1” representing only Mild facilitation for a person without a mobility impairment. That's associated with the idea that ICF coding can be utilized even in cases representing people without impairments, because ICF is a classification of health, not disease or only the negative aspects of disablement.



Activities & Participation

d129 Purposeful sensory experiences, other specified

Environmental Factors

e1150+3 General products and technology for personal use in daily living, Substantial Facilitator

Description of the Image

This is an unusual photograph, but it is perfect for ICF coding!

This image represents what a person on the inside of a private door might see through a “fish-eye lens” or “peephole” in the door, if that lens were positioned at an appropriate height for a person using a wheelchair.

We judged that the person viewing through this peephole might be inside an apartment without any windows on the sides of the front door. That means the peephole is important for security. The photograph was taken from the perspective of a person on the inside of an apartment, looking outside the front door onto the interior hallway of their apartment building. We judged that the lady in red clothing might be standing in that interior hallway, on the opposite side of this apartment's front door. It is possible the lady in red clothing might have just rung the apartment's doorbell, just before this photo had been snapped from the inside.

The vast majority of contemporary doors that have peephole fixtures are constructed in a manner that assumes the user of the peephole will be standing. Not everyone who needs a peephole can stand, though. So, there are adapted peepholes. They are truly environmentally facilitative for users who cannot stand at a certain height.

In this photograph, the peephole is also adapted by having a wider angle than conventional peepholes: the visible image is magnified for the user. In sum, this photo shows what a person on the inside of the wide-angle peephole installed at a height of about 1.25 meters (~ 48 in.) above the floor might see. He or she sees a woman dressed in a red blouse or dress who might have just rung the doorbell, and is waiting to be greeted.

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

We selected A&P code **d129**, for “Purposeful sensory experiences, other specified.” This code might not be intuitive, but we selected it because the activity involved with looking through a peephole (whether adapted or not) is, in ICF terms, a “purposeful sensory experience.” The person inside the apartment is doing more than simply seeing; he or she is trying to see through this adapted lens for a particular purpose.

This code for purposeful sensory experience is from A&P Chapter 1, "Learning and Applying Knowledge." The other purposeful sensory experiences in this series in A&P Chapter 1, "Learning and Applying Knowledge," include more distinct activities: Watching (**d110**), Listening (**d115**), and Other purposeful sensing (**d120**). That last code, **d120**, might be suitable, but its ICF definition seems to pertain more to sensory experiences associated with touch, taste, and smell, rather than visual purposeful sensory experiences. "Watching" also seems to pertain more to watching an event or children playing. So, we selected and assigned the Other Specified code in this series, **d129**.

We also assigned Environmental Factors code **e1150+3**, "General products and technology for personal use in daily living, Substantial Facilitator," pertaining to the adaptation of this peephole for the more comfortable daily use of a wheelchair user.

This type of peephole fixture is a "general" or regular product, found in many hardware or home improvement stores, rather than a specially designed assistive device. The ICF distinguishes between "general" products and technology and "assistive" products and technology, even though both kinds can be assistive. This categorization distinguishes ordinary products or gadgets that can be purchased or installed easily as assistive products, from products that are specially designed or retrofitted for assisting a particular person or group of people.

For our ICF coding purposes, that means this peephole is a general, rather than an assistive product, although it certainly assists the resident in this apartment.

Installing this peephole in a conventional door would be both easy and inexpensive. The degree of "peace of mind" that can be achieved when the apartment resident can easily determine who their visitor is might be worth the cost of the retrofitting, in personal terms. In ICF terms, the degree of facilitation afforded by the adapted peephole is Substantial, therefore we assigned qualifier digit "**+3**" to the code stem representing this general product. In a Universal Design context, a person without a mobility or visual impairment can also benefit from using this kind of adapted

peephole. A standing person would also be able to utilize it comfortably, too, for everyone's enhanced sense of security and independence.

Discussion

This photograph provided a wonderful, very graphic opportunity to demonstrate an important ICF coding principle in the Environmental Factors domain:

“Environmental factors are to be coded from the perspective of the person whose situation is being described” (2001; page 232).

The perspective of this photograph is literally that of the person whose situation we are describing! It is the “fish-eye lens” viewpoint of what the adaptation really provides, for everyone, but especially for persons who cannot stand, or might not visually focus well enough through a conventional, tiny peephole. So, we could not have even tried to code this situation without remembering that ICF coding rule, but that's only to reinforce it: we code Environmental Factors from the user's perspective, even if we cannot actually observe the user *per se*.



Activities & Participation

d4401

Grasping

Environmental Factors

- e1201+3 Assistive products and technology for personal indoor and outdoor mobility and transportation, Substantial Facilitator
- e1151+3 Design, construction, and building products and technology for gaining access to facilities inside buildings for public use, Substantial Facilitator

Description of the Image

No, this is not a photograph of a gentleman showering. It is a photograph of a fully-clothed gentleman sitting in a shower stall that might be in a building for public use, such as a gymnasium or health club. This is adapted from PHIL image # 9211.

For our ICF coding purposes, we might focus on the act of showering, but he's not involved in personal care or hygiene. Instead, on behalf of the Center for Universal Design, which contributed this photograph, our model was demonstrating the benefits of a "universally designed shower stall," for all users, but especially for persons with difficulties carrying, moving, or handling objects. Our model might also have a mobility impairment, suggested by his walking cane perched on the tile wall to the viewer's right.

Justification for Selecting the ICF Codes

We selected one Activities & Participation code, and two Environmental Factors codes. In A&P, we assigned **d4401**, for "Grasping," to represent the activity we can observe our model performing. At the moment the photo was snapped, he was grasping the interior shower bar, which is designed for easy grasping among many users, for enhancing their stability in the wet portion of the shower.

By assigning this code, we are not assessing that this gentleman actually exhibits difficulties in grasping, but rather that that is what our two-dimensional photographic observation provides for us as ICF Coders. In the Universal Design context, the purpose of the photograph had been to demonstrate the positioning of the shower bars, the shower bench on which our model is seated, and the moveable shower fixtures at a height reachable from the shower bench. We could assign ICF codes, particularly Environmental Factors codes, to each of those universally-designed features. By selecting an A&P code for grasping, we hope to demonstrate that Environmental Facilitators, such as the design of this shower stall and its installed grab-bars, can enhance the performance of the activities associated with grasping --- whether wet or dry!

Our first Environmental Factors code is **e1201+2**, for “Assistive products and technology for personal indoor and outdoor mobility and transportation, Moderate Facilitator.” This code refers to the gentleman’s walking cane, which not only helps him stand or walk, it can also be placed nearby in this particular shower stall, to assist his mobility again after he has finished his showering.

Our second Environmental Factors code is **e1501+3**, for “Design, construction, and building products and technology for gaining access to facilities inside buildings for public use, Substantial Facilitator.” In this case, the design of the gymnasium’s shower stalls are suitable for many users to gain full access to the upper or lower shower head, and to use or not use the collapsible shower bench. For this gentleman, or another user of a walking cane or wheelchair, that degree of facilitation might be Substantial, even though the adaptations are relatively modest and inexpensive. For other users of the same shower stall at the gym, who might not have any mobility impairments, the adaptations are helpful but unnecessary, representing only mild facilitation, if any.

Discussion

This photograph provided us with a final opportunity in this edition of “Coder’s Corner” to demonstrate the close relationship between

Environmental Factors and Activities & Participation in the ICF. In these examples, we've only seen Environmental Facilitators, not Barriers.

The flexibility of the Environmental Factors domain is manifested in the coding framework that calls for using the same code stem to describe a phenomenon, but to modify the observation of that phenomenon by describing it as a Barrier or Facilitator. For example, an inaccessible shower stall would have received the same code stem assignment, **e1501**, but with a qualifier representing a Mild or Moderate Barrier, respectively **e1501.1** or **e1501.2**.

Thank you for joining us for this edition of Coder's Corner!

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