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OPCS-4 Requests Portal Question and Answers

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0.1	20/09/2007	First draft for comment. Includes formatting, sub-editing and template placement.
0.2		Second draft for comment
0.3		Third draft for sub-editing
0.4		Fourth draft for review and updating of screen shots
0.5		Final Review

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Reviewers:

This document must be reviewed by the following. Indicate any delegation for sign off.

Name	Signature	Title / Responsibility	Date	Version
Lynn Bracewell		NHS Classifications Service Manager	21-09-07	
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Approvals:

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Signature	Title / Responsibility	Date	Version
Lynn Bracewell		NHS Classifications Service	21-09-07	

Distribution:

For any user accessing the OPCS-4 Web Portal and wishing to view or download.

Document Status:

This is a controlled document.

This document version is only valid at the time it is retrieved from controlled filestore, after which a new approved version will replace it.

On receipt of a new issue, please destroy all previous issues (unless a specified earlier issue is baselined for use throughout the programme).

Related Documents:

These documents will provide additional information.

Ref no	Doc Reference Number	Title	Version
1		OPCS-4 Requests Portal Submission Guidance document	
2		OPCS-4 Requests Portal User Guide	

Glossary of Terms:

List any new terms created in this document.

Term	Acronym	Definition
OPCS		Office of Population Census and Surveys

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1. Purpose of Questions & Answers

The purpose of these Questions & Answers is to give trouble shooting advice with regard to making submissions on the OPCS-4 Requests Portal.

2. Background

OPCS-4 is now reviewed annually and open to requests from the NHS and interested parties. To further improve the procedure for supplying change requests to the OPCS-4 Review Team, the NHS Classifications Service (responsible for the development and maintenance of the classifications in use in the NHS) has created an on-line submissions Portal. Users can make their suggestions, track progress and further communicate with the NHS Classifications Service regarding their submissions.

3. Questions and Answers (Q&As)

The Q&As provide additional information on the OPCS-4 Requests Portal at www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/opcs4requestsportal

If the information you require is not here, please contact the National Clinical Classifications Helpdesk via datastandards@nhs.net

1. What is the 'Status' field?

'Status' is a data item used by the NHS Classifications Service to manage requests and keep requesters informed of progress. The following 'statuses' are used in My Requests area of the Submissions Portal:

- *OPCS-4 Change Request to be evaluated*
All new requests awaiting evaluation by the NHS Classification Service are "defaulted" to this status.
- *Provisional acceptance*
The Request meets some or all the criteria defined in the Submission Guidance, however it is no guarantee that the request will be included in the following version of OPCS-4.
- *Further information required to progress Change Request*
The NHS Classifications Service OPCS-4 Review Team requires more information before assigning Status.

- *Change Request declined*

The request does not meet the acceptance criteria for consideration for inclusion in OPCS-4. Reason for declining request is provided in the Status field. Please refer to the OPCS-4 Requests Portal Submission Guidance document for more details on criteria

- *OPCS-4 Change Request – deferred*

The request is held over for consideration for inclusion in a future release.

- *Change request accepted*

The request has been included in OPCS-4. This Status is set after release of the data files for the new version of OPCS-4.

2. What happens to my request?

Your request is evaluated by NHS Classification Service experts. This includes checking that the proposed change is a suitable for inclusion in OPCS-4 against set criteria and existing editorial rules that preserve the integrity of the classification as explained in the OPCS-4 Submission Guidelines. This includes ensuring that your request cannot already be adequately expressed in the current edition of OPCS-4.

Requests that conform to the set criteria are provisionally accepted. This is the first step in a long journey involving:

- research,
- specialist advice from clinical experts,
- modelling the validated procedures within the OPCS-4 structure, authoring the codes, descriptions and associated attributes in the OPCS-4 Editor,
- cross-mapping to the Read Codes and SNOMED CT,
- internal and external quality assurance,
- publication of manuals and data files,
- reviewing and updating or developing new training materials.

A change that is deemed necessary but would breach Editorial Policy is referred to the OPCS-4 Editorial Board for consideration. Approval of the change to the OPCS-4 NHS Information Standard is sought from the NHS Information Standards Board (NHS ISB).

3. When will my request be evaluated?

All requests are reviewed for conformance to set criteria by NHS Classification Service OPCS-4 Review Team. The frequency of these meetings is dependent on the timing of the next release. Meetings will be held regularly leading up to the deadline for receipt of requests. Requests submitted after the deadline for new content will be held over until the following revision of OPCS-4.

4. How will I know when my request has been evaluated?

You will receive an auto generated email when your request has been evaluated by the OPCS-4 Review Team. You may also log on to the OPCS-4 Requests Portal and go the [My Requests](#) tab on the right hand menu to view the status of your submission(s).

5. Is there a deadline for the submission of requests?

Yes. It is essential for the NHS Classifications Service to set a deadline for receipt of requests for the next release in order to allow sufficient time to process the changes. The deadline for receipt of change requests is published on the NHS Classifications Service website.

However, the OPCS-4 Requests Portal will be available **all year round** for the receipt of change requests and the NHS Classifications Service welcomes the ongoing submission of requests.

6. Could my request be rejected after the initial provisional acceptance?

Yes. Your request may be declined subsequent to research by the OPCS-4 Review Team, or as a result of advice arising from consultation with interested parties. Where this occurs the status of your request will be updated to "[Change request declined](#)".

7. When will I know whether my request will be incorporated in the next release of OPCS-4?

As explained above, your request undergoes a rigorous process of evaluation, research, development and quality assurance before it is included in OPCS-4. Additionally the change to the Information Standard has to be approved by the NHS ISB. The status of “Provisional acceptance” will change to “Change request accepted” on “My Requests” on the OPCS-4 Requests Portal after all the processes have been completed and the data files are published.

The date of publication of the OPCS-4 data files will be published on the NHS Classification Service website in advance of a release:

www.connectingforhealth/clinicalcoding

8. May I resubmit a declined request?

Healthcare delivery is continually changing, so it may become necessary to repeat a submission. If this is the case, please provide additional evidence to support the change request. Please note that your re-submission may fall outside the deadline for the next release. If this occurs, it will be considered for a subsequent release.

9. How do I respond to “Further information required to progress change”?

Go to My Requests tab on the right-hand menu bar. The status “Further information required to progress change” will be highlighted in red, click on the Edit button alongside status. A page displaying your request will open. Please add the additional information as requested by the OPCS-4 Review Team and press the submit button.

10. How will requests submitted prior to the OPCS-4 Request Portal be handled?

Unfortunately, the NHS Classifications Service is unable to offer the same level of feedback on requests submitted before the launch of the online OPCS-4 Requests

Portal because of the changes in the way the information was collected. Therefore, you will not be able to view or track requests submitted prior to the launch of the Portal.

11. Is the list of reasons for rejecting a request available?

Minor changes are declined for the following reasons:

- There are alternative ways of spelling this particular medical term so no one is absolutely incorrect. Preference will be given to the current spelling to minimise updates – unless there is a good reason for change e.g. inconsistent spelling within the classification.
- Proposed change to a rule or guideline is incorrect, or the change will affect the integrity of data collection, or it is thought unnecessary as the existing guidance is sufficient.
- Proposed change can be covered by clarifying or publishing national guidance (e.g. via *Coding Clinic*).
- The request is already covered adequately in the classification.
- The request is more appropriately handled by submission to the National Clinical Classifications Helpdesk.

Major changes are declined for the following reasons:

- The request conflicts with current editorial rules which does not allow the following:
 - Deletion of a code
 - Retirement of a code
 - Re-use of a code
 - Change of meaning of a code.
- The current 3- or 4- character code description is:
 - clinically accurate and the classification concept is correct;
 - or the request does not add clarity or value;
 - and/or the request changes the meaning therefore in breach of OPCS-4 editorial rules.
- The proposed new code:
 - does not identify an intervention sufficiently important and different in terms of frequency, cost, site, technique, approach use of technology or device, stage or invasiveness to warrant a new code;

- and/or sufficient evidence has not been provided in the submission to warrant inclusion
- There is no evidence of national acceptance in clinical knowledge or practice and may be information specific to a unique situation, clinician, group etc.
- The request is already covered adequately in the classification.
- The specialty is already defined as outside the scope of OPCS-4 by previous OPCS-4 Editorial Board decisions.
- The request includes granularity which is more appropriate for a terminology, rather than a classification.
- The update or new code compromises the scope, purpose and structure of the classification as laid out in the OPCS-4 editorial rules.
- There is Insufficient (clinical and/or financial) information to process (Please refer to submission guidelines for information).
- The proposed change is not compliant with the OPCS-4 definition of a procedure or intervention.
- Proposed change can already be captured adequately in ICD-10.
- The update or new code is not necessary and the request can be addressed by existing definition to ensure correct usage (e.g. referencing *Coding Clinic* guidance)
- The addition of the abbreviation NEC does not provide clarity to the coder (and may be due to a lack of understanding by the originator of the requirement.)
- The assignment of the abbreviation causes duplication in the meaning of two terms.
- The requirement has identified a problem in a code/category that needs to be addressed elsewhere.

Note: This list is not comprehensive. Analysis and research, subsequent to the initial evaluation, may indicate that the change request is not a suitable candidate for inclusion in OPCS-4.

12. What are the criteria for accepting a request?

Minor changes that comply with the following criteria are accepted:

- A typographical error e.g. spelling, hyphen, part or missing word(s), incorrect spacing etc.

- Insertion, deletion or amendment of an index entry trail relating to the same three character category that aids navigation for the user in allocating the final code assignment, but does not change the final code assignment.
- Addition of a rule or convention which aids navigation, or the user in allocating the final code assignment or combination of codes but does not change the existing coding.

Major changes that comply with the following criteria are accepted:

- Change to a 3- or 4- character code description that will enhance the category description but will not change the concept. This may be because the existing code description is erroneous or ambiguous.
- A new code which identifies an intervention sufficiently important and different in terms of frequency, cost, site, technique, approach use of technology or device, stage or invasiveness to warrant a new code and evidence of such is provided in the submission. NICE Guidelines will also be referenced.
- Reflects a nationally accepted change in clinical knowledge or practice that would improve the classification without compromising the scope, purpose or structure.
- Change to an existing index entry which changes the code assignment from one three-character category to another three-character category (movement of terms).
- Addition of abbreviation e.g. NEC (Not Elsewhere Classified) to alert the coder to review other index entries to make sure that a more specific code is not available.
- The request requires expert clinical input.
- Deletion of an abbreviation e.g. NEC (Not Elsewhere classified).

Note: The acceptance of all change requests is provisional until the NHS Classifications Service publishes the new version of the OPCS-4 data files.