



## **Namespace Allocation Policy/Regulation**

**Title:** Namespace Allocation Policy/Regulation

**Effective Date:** August 4, 2009

**Owner:** Management Board

**Date Last Reviewed:** October 14, 2009

**Date Last Revised:** October 14, 2009

### **Regulation Statement**

IHTSDO will allocate SNOMED CT Namespace Identifiers upon written request from a Member or an Affiliate in accordance with the procedures outlined below. The IHTSDO will also maintain and publish a register of Namespace Identifiers issued.

Section 9 of the Articles of Association provides the starting point for the Namespace Allocation Policy. It states that:

- 9.1 Only the Association may issue Namespace Identifiers.
- 9.2 The Association shall, upon written request from a Member or an Affiliate in accordance with such procedures as the Association may prescribe by Regulations, issue one or more Namespace Identifiers to the Member or Affiliate. The Association shall not unreasonably refuse to issue a Namespace Identifier to a Member or an Affiliate.
- 9.3 The Association shall be responsible for ensuring that each Namespace Identifier is only issued to a single Member or Affiliate.

In addition, section 7.1.7 states that “An Affiliate may not create any Standards-Based Third Party Extension or any Standards-Based Derivative from the Member’s National Extensions unless that Affiliate has been issued with a Namespace Identifier.”

### **Definitions**

*Affiliate:* An Affiliate of IHTSDO in accordance with IHTSDO’s *Articles of Association*, i.e. a person or organization to which the International Release of SNOMED CT (whether on its own or as part of a Member’s National Release of SNOMED CT) is distributed or otherwise made available under the *Articles of Association*.

*Namespace Identifier:* A code or that part of a code that identifies the organization responsible for creating and maintaining a standards-based extension or a standards-based derivative. It is an element of SNOMED CT concept identifiers.

### **Context**

Namespace Identifiers are 7-digit numbers that IHTSDO issues to those who create extensions to SNOMED CT, such as national extensions. Namespace identifiers ensure that it is clear who developed and maintains particular customized terminology. They also ensure that terminology in SNOMED CT extensions has unique identifiers but a common structure, which facilitates application development and the creation of subsets. There is a defined



process for management of Namespace Identifiers when terminology is moved between extensions or from an extension into the International Release.

It should be noted that this policy covers the technical mechanism to allocate Namespace Identifiers in order to be able to identify the source of content, prevent collisions in terminology that would affect interoperability, and achieve similar goals. It does not cover whether or not particular types of content, including extensions and derivatives, can be used in a given context. This may be the subject of national policies, guidelines, or other documents. Requestors of a Namespace Identifier are encouraged to review SNOMED CT International Release documentation and to consult with IHTSDO Members in countries in which deployment of any content developed in the Namespace is planned for additional guidance, policy, and/or process documents which may be relevant.

## Procedures

(1) *Informing the Community of Practice:* IHTSDO will inform the Community of Practice about the process for requesting a Namespace Identifier.

- A copy of this regulation will be posted to the IHTSDO website.
- Instructions for requesting a Namespace Identifier, including the form for making such a request, will be posted to an appropriate location on the IHTSDO website (e.g. the Frequently Asked Question or “How do I?” pages)
- Confirm which Members would like to be notified when one of their Affiliates requests a Namespace, i.e. an Affiliate listing an address in the jurisdiction in question on their Namespace Identifier Application Form and/or who identified that they received their Affiliate License through that jurisdiction.

(2) *Requesting & Granting a Namespace:* The Association shall, upon written request from a Member or an Affiliate in accordance with such procedures as the Association may prescribe by Regulations, issue one or more Namespace Identifiers to the Member or Affiliate. The Association shall not unreasonably refuse to issue a Namespace Identifier to a Member or an Affiliate.

- To request a Namespace Identifier, individuals/organizations should complete and submit a copy of the Namespace Identifier Application Form by email to [support@ihtsdo.org](mailto:support@ihtsdo.org).
- IHTSDO or its designated support organization should verify that the requestor is either:
  - An IHTSDO Member
  - An individual or organization who holds a valid Affiliate License
  - An individual or organization who does not fall into the above categories but whose application is approved in writing by the IHTSDO
- If the conditions above apply, IHTSDO or its designated support organization should issue a unique Namespace Identifier to the requestor if:
  - The request is from an IHTSDO Member;
  - The request is from the holder of a valid Affiliate License, is for a single Namespace Identifier, and the requestor has not already been issued a Namespace Identifier; OR



- IHTSDO's CEO approves the request in writing.
- The issuance of the Namespace Identifier should be confirmed in writing with the requestor, along with a link to this policy and a reminder that they will be contacted annually to reconfirm their contact information and potentially provide additional information to be published in the register. Requestors should also be provided with Member contact information and the recommendation that they should contact relevant Members to obtain any additional national guidance, policy, and process documents which may be relevant.
- The relevant Member should be informed if they have requested to be notified when an Affiliate from their jurisdiction requests a Namespace, i.e. an Affiliate listing an address in the jurisdiction in question on their Namespace Identifier Application Form and/or who identified that they received their Affiliate License through that jurisdiction..

(3) *Format of Namespace Identifiers:*

- Namespace Identifiers are 7 digit numeric codes.
- Namespace Identifiers are issued in sequence, unique, and not re-used.

(4) *Maintaining and Publishing a Namespace Register:* IHTSDO will maintain and publish an up-to-date Namespace Register.

- When Namespace Identifiers are allocated, a record of the number of that identifier, the date of issuance, the body from which the Affiliate License was obtained (if applicable), and the name and contact information of the individual/organization to which it was issued will be added to the Namespace Register.
- On an annual basis, IHTSDO or its designated support organization will contact all those to whom Namespace Identifiers have been issued by email to confirm contact information. A reminder will be sent after 30 days if a response has not been received. The year in which a confirmation of current contact information was last received will also appear in the Namespace Register.
- IHTSDO reserves the right to make a Namespace Identifier inactive for current and future use (i.e. it cannot be used for newly-created concepts from that point onward) if the individual or organization to which it was issued cannot be contacted after three attempts. This status will be noted in the Namespace Register and the individual or organization to which the Namespace Identifier was issued will be notified accordingly.
- IHTSDO also reserves the right to make a Namespace Identifier inactive if (1) it is requested to do so by the organization to which the Namespace Identifier was issued, (2) the organization to which the Namespace Identifier was issued is involved in a merger or acquisition with another organization to which a Namespace Identifier has been issued, or (3) it receives a written complaint about the use of that Namespace that, upon investigation, it determines to be well-founded, according to the protocol for material breaches and termination of Affiliate Licenses identified in clause 5.2 of the Affiliate License.



- The Namespace Register will be published with each version of the SNOMED CT International Release. In the future, IHTSDO reserves the right to also publish the Namespace Register on the IHTSDO website.

## References

- *IHTSDO Articles of Association*
- *SNOMED CT Technical Implementation Guide*
- *IHTSDO Namespace Identifier Application Form*

## Document Control

This policy was approved by the IHTSDO Management Board on August 4, 2009 and is subject to regular review according to IHTSDO's policy review processes. Key stakeholders include the Technical Committee, the Implementation and Innovation Committee, the Member Forum, and the Affiliate Forum.

## Appendix

# IHTSDO Namespace Identifier Application Form

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Legal name of applicant (organization or person)		
Applicant Type <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliate Licensee <input type="checkbox"/> National Release Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify _____)		
Principal contact (authorized to receive official notices)		
Title/position		
Postal Address		
City	State/Province	Postal Code
Country	Telephone (country code-area/city-number)	Fax (country code-area/city-number)
	+   -   -	+   -   -
Email address		
Name of Body through which Affiliate License obtained (e.g. National Release Centre) (if applicant is an Affiliate Licensee)		
INTENDED USE		
Intended use (optional – please describe the intended products and activities for which the Namespace Identifier would be used)		

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Use of a SNOMED CT Namespace Identifier is governed by the Terms and Conditions of the <a href="#">Affiliate License</a> , as well as by policies and guidelines established by the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO). By submitting this application, the applicant agrees that its use of any Namespace Identifiers, including those assigned to it, will be in accordance with these requirements, particularly the <i>Articles of Association</i> and the <i>Technical Implementation Guide</i> . Please note that information provided on this application may be distributed in various ways, including with the International Release of SNOMED CT and to the general public through the IHTSDO website. By submitting this application, you are consenting to the publication of this information by the IHTSDO. Please consult with <a href="#">IHTSDO Members</a> in countries in which deployment of any content developed in the Namespace is planned for additional guidance, policy, and/or process documents which may be relevant. You will be contacted annually to reconfirm contact information and potentially provide additional information to be published in the register.	
Application submitted by (name of authorized person)	Title/Position
Signature	Application Date (yyyy-mmm-dd) -   -

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Affiliate License Verified by (NRC, IHTSDO, Support Org.)	Date Verified
Application Approved by:	Date Approved
Namespace Identifier	Namespace ConceptID

Thank you for your application for a Namespace Identifier. Please submit this application form to the IHTSDO as a PDF email attachment (email to [support@ihtsdo.org](mailto:support@ihtsdo.org)) or by fax to +1-847-832-8700.