

DAPB0084: OPCS-4.11 Implementation Guidance

November 2025



Data Alliance Partnership Board

The Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB), which holds delegated authority from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, has approved a change to an existing information standard for publication under [section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).

Assurance that this information standard meets the requirements of the Act and is appropriate for the use specified in the specification document has been provided by the Data Governance, Assurance and Testing (DGAT) team and endorsed by the Data Assurance Board (DAB).

This information standard comprises the following documents:

- Change Specification
- Implementation Guidance (this document)
- Requirements Specification

An Information Standards Notice (DAPB0084 Amd 36/2025) has been issued as a notification of use and implementation timescales. Please read this alongside the documents for the standard.

The controlled copies of these documents can be found on the [NHS England website](#). Any copies held outside of that area, in whatever format (e.g. paper, email attachment), are considered to have passed out of control and should be checked for currency and validity.

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Glossary of Terms

A full glossary of terms is available in the [Requirements Specification](#) that accompanies this Standard.

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1. Purpose

This document signposts the user to the guidance available to support the implementation of the information standard - OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures, Version 4.11, also known as OPCS-4.11, on 1 April 2026.

This document identifies the relevant guidance for organisations and key members of staff who are required to implement the standard. It is recommended that the full list of resources is referenced by all users as there may be other useful information.

2. Summary of the standard

Standard	
DAPB unique identifier	DAPB0084 Amd 36/2025
Title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.11
Description	<p>The OPCS-4 Classification of Interventions and Procedures (OPCS-4) is an NHS fundamental information standard published under section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Ref DAPB0084). OPCS-4 is updated every 3 years to reflect current NHS clinical practice to support aggregate data for statistical purposes and reimbursement.</p> <p>OPCS-4 is a statistical classification for clinical coding of hospital interventions and procedures undertaken by the NHS. The classification is mandatory for use by healthcare providers to support various forms of data collections for secondary uses.</p> <p>The classification comprises a list of alphanumeric codes organised into mainly anatomically based chapters. It is available online using the NHS Classifications Browser.</p> <p>The Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service has responsibility for the support, maintenance, development and licensing of the OPCS-4 which is governed by Crown Copyright.</p>
Applies to	<p>All Health Care Providers that are required to submit data on interventions and procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admitted Patient Care Commissioning Data Sets (CDS) Other data collections as defined in the NHS Data Model and Dictionary.

	Implementation of the change to this information standard impacts all health IT systems suppliers providing systems to the above providers; such providers should work with their suppliers to determine necessary changes.
Release	
Release title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.11 (OPCS-4.11)
Description	OPCS-4.11 contains updates submitted by the NHS, NHS England, DH, NHS England and other organisations via the OPCS-4 Requests Portal and released by the NHS England Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service.
Implementation Completion date	1 April 2026

2.1. Related documents

Ref #	Title
1	OPCS-4.11 Information Standards Notice
2	OPCS-4.11 NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request
3	Summary of Core Changes from OPCS-4.10 to OPCS-4.11
4	OPCS-4.11 Requirements Specification
5	OPCS-4.11 Change Specification

2.2. Supporting Information

Ref #	Title
1	OPCS-4.11 Codes and Titles with associated Technical Specification
2	National Clinical Coding Standards OPCS-4.11

2.3. Related Standards

Ref #	Reference	Title
1	SCCI0021	ICD-10 5th Edition
2	SCCI0034	SNOMED CT

3	DCB0160	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems
4	DCB0129	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Manufacture of Health IT Systems

3. Guidance for organisations

3.1. System/software suppliers

NHS IT system and software suppliers must build/update software to support NHS business functions and interoperability - according to new and existing contractual arrangements – to support local implementations in readiness for the go live date of 1 April 2026.

The OPCS-4.11 data files to support suppliers are released in two formats:

- Extensible Markup Language (XML) which is the required standard for the NHS, and
- Text file format. TRUD download data shows that this format continues to be widely used by system suppliers.

The XML schema/text file specification addresses the generation of OPCS-4 data from the data files for use within an application. It does not address formats required for interoperability with other services. Systems/software must comply with the guidance that regulates the submission of Commissioning Data Sets (CDS) to the [Secondary Uses Service \(SUS\)](#).

A FHIR® compliant version of the data will also be available from the [NHS England Terminology Server](#).

The data files must be implemented in accordance with the technical specification issued with the OPCS-4.11 Metadata file.

NHS IT system and software suppliers that support SNOMED CT enabled electronic patient care systems, use the SNOMED CT terminology to classifications map data files to support the semi-automated derivation of OPCS-4 and ICD-10. These data files are issued as part of the terminology release – see [Delen](#) for the SNOMED CT release schedule.

Software suppliers who supply encoders will need to update them in readiness for the go live date.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

3.2. Health care providers

Health care providers must implement OPCS-4.11 data files in readiness for 1 April 2026 as described in the OPCS-4.11 Metadata file Technical Specification.

Information systems must support the coding of Care Professional Admitted Care Episodes in OPCS-4.10 and OPCS-4.11 as part of the transition to the updated classification.

Health care providers need to undertake adequate planning and engage with their system suppliers, as well as information, coding and finance departments to ensure a smooth implementation for 1 April 2026. Potential problems can be mitigated with proper advance preparation to avoid compliance issues, coding backlogs, inaccurate data and incorrect reimbursement.

The benefits to be gained from the OPCS-4.11 updates depend upon:

- clear, concise and accurate clinical information provided within the episode of care to be coded in the care record.
- accurate, consistent and complete application of the classification to reflect the intervention detailed in the care record.

A PowerPoint presentation called "[OPCS-4.11 Implementation: Preparing for implementation](#)" is provided to support local implementers.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

3.3. Integrated Care Boards

Integrated Care Boards (ICB's) use the OPCS-4.11 data to plan and buy services for their local community from any service providers that meet the required NHS standards and costs to support local health needs.

ICB's will need to implement OPCS-4.11 data files on 1 April 2026 as described in the OPCS-4.11 Metadata file technical specification.

The OPCS-4.11 Table of Coding Equivalences (ToCE) data file and associated specification supports analyses between different versions across time.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

4. Key staff involved in implementation

4.1. Implementation lead

Organisations that are required to implement the changes must have someone with overall responsibility for successful implementation of updates to the standard. The updates to the clinical classifications are scheduled for release every three years and local implementers should have well-established implementation plans.

The NHS England Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service publishes a checklist - [OPCS-4.11 Implementation: Preparing for implementation](#) - to help anyone planning for or managing the implementation in readiness for the go-live date of 1 April 2026.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

4.2. ICT managers

ICT departments must support the day-to-day activities of clinical coders by enabling access to the NHS Classifications Browser OPCS-4.11 (and ICD-10).

Electronic books and web-based applications are becoming the preferred options for the publication of clinical classifications worldwide. OPCS-4.11 printed books will not be produced as communicated in the [Transition Plan to Electronic Classifications for ICD-10 and OPCS-4](#) in May 2024. OPCS-4.11 will be accessed using the [NHS Classifications Browser](#). The Browser replicates the "look and feel" of the print version of OPCS-4.

The Browser allows users to browse and search the ICD-10 and OPCS-4 classifications and contains links to the current National Clinical Coding Standards. It is free to access from any computer with an internet connection removing the necessity to purchase hard copies and reducing local implementation costs.

Feedback from coding departments suggests that some clinical coders are unable to access some electronic media due to local security restrictions and delays to installation of software. ICT managers and clinical coding managers are encouraged to work together to resolve such impediments to the use of new technology.

It is expected that ICT departments will have liaised with clinical coding managers and have a schedule of activity in place to support the implementation of OPCS-4.11.

More information the NHS Classifications Browser can be found [here](#).

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

4.3. Information analysts/statisticians

Information analysts/statisticians use the coded data to support operational and strategic planning, commissioning, and the National Tariff Payment System and to produce various mandatory statistical outputs.

The OPCS-4.11 Table of Coding Equivalences (ToCE) data file and associated technical specification support analyses between different versions across time.

The OPCS-4.11 ToCE file is released with the data files via the TRUD service.

Important Note: Updates to the classifications and coding standards must be implemented at the start of the fiscal year, i.e. 1 April, rather than potentially taking place at any point throughout the fiscal year.. Having a regular fixed point for changes enables data comparability and creation of meaningful statistics for local/national purposes, including time series data essential to the effective planning, improvement and policy development of the NHS. The data also underpins the NHS payment system.

Failure to comply means activity affected by the change will be incorrectly coded. Inaccurate data places the trust at risk for example of distorted clinical outcome indicators and incorrect reimbursement.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

4.4. Clinical coding managers/clinical coders

OPCS-4.11 is used by clinical coders to classify procedures and hospital interventions to support various forms of data collection for operational and secondary uses. The codes are mandatory for Admitted Patient Care Commissioning Data Sets (CDS) and underpin the payment system for health care providers.

Clinical coders must provide accurate, consistent, complete, and timely coding to enable the health care provider to meet the SUS data submission deadlines.

Existing clinical coders are already trained to use OPCS-4. They assign the codes according to the rules of the classification using information recorded in the source documentation by the clinicians. OPCS-4 may be used by other staff depending on local operational requirements.

Where terminology enabled electronic patient records are deployed, procedures (and diagnoses) are captured in SNOMED CT and converted to the classifications via semi-automated maps. Encoders support the coding function by integrating an electronic version of OPCS-4.11 and mapping files to automate coding where possible and provide prompts or flags to improve the accuracy and speed. However, these maps are not always 1 to 1; consequently, some maps must be quality assured by a clinical coder taking into consideration context, rules, conventions and coding standards as necessary.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

4.5. Clinical coding trainers

Approved clinical coding trainers support the implementation of updates to the classifications. Within a local trust those responsible for clinical coding will find it beneficial to arrange awareness sessions for clinical personnel. Targeted training sessions can benefit those groups of staff and specialties impacted by the OPCS-4.11 update. This includes information, finance and other staff groups that use the data to support mandatory data collections as well as local service planning and delivery.

Local awareness materials for these staff groups can be based on the summary of changes, and the key learning points provided by the Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service.

Clinical coding managers need to ensure that all clinical coding staff receive adequate training so that the updates can be accurately and consistently applied as part of the coding

process. The type of training will be dependent on local circumstances and the type and extent of the changes. The Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service provides national reference products and training materials to support the coding community.

See [Full list of guidance to support implementation](#).

5. Patient confidentiality

All staff accessing patient medical records for clinical coding purposes must abide by local and national confidentiality policies and codes of practice as a breach may lead to disciplinary action, a fine or, in the case of a breach of the Gender Recognition Act 2004, possible prosecution.

Guidance for data and information sharing at both operational and secondary uses levels exists nationally, for example:

- [The NHS Confidentiality Code of Practice \(2003\)](#)

This document is a guide to required practice concerning confidentiality and patients' consent to the use of their health records for those who work within or under contract to NHS organisations.

Your organisation's local Caldicott Guardian will be able to provide specific advice on any queries that you may have around patient confidentiality.

This should be reinforced during training.

6. Implementation costs

Overheads for the implementation of the new editions of both ICD-10 and OPCS-4 are catered for in the NHS Standard Contract.

Trusts need to ensure that resources are available to meet implementation costs which will include the necessary updating of IT systems and the cost of staff training.

The NHS Classifications Browser is free.

NHS England provides the funding for the development, maintenance and resources to support the implementation of updates to OPCS-4.11.

7. Retention of previous versions of OPCS-4

Organisations should retain previous versions of OPCS-4 to decode historical data.

8. Full list of guidance to support implementation

Note: you may find it useful to refer to the implementation plan in the DAPB0084 OPCS-4.11 Change Paper.

Implementation Guidance/source	Format	Audience	Release date
Notification of Change	Newsletter	Health care providers Integrated Care Boards NHS IT system and software suppliers	November 2023
External feedback period on Draft Summary of Core Changes OPCS-4.10 to OPCS-4.11	PDF On-line survey	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	27 June 2025 – 01 August 2025
Information Standards Notice DAPBI0084: OPCS-4.11 Change Paper DAPB0084: OPCS-4.11 Requirements Specification DAPB0084: OPCS-4.11 Implementation Guidance NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request See DAPB documentation supporting standard here	PDF	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	November 2025
Final Summary of Core Changes OPCS-4.10 to OPCS-4.11 See DAPB documentation supporting standard here	PDF	Health care providers Integrated Care Boards NHS IT system and software suppliers Data analysts Clinical Coding Departments	November 2025
OPCS-4.11 Implementation: Preparing for implementation Available via Delen.	PowerPoint presentation	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	November 2025

<p>OPCS-4.11 Codes and Titles Metadata files and associated specification</p> <p>Released via TRUD and the NHS England Terminology Server</p>	<p>XML</p> <p>Text file</p> <p>PDF</p> <p>FHIR®</p>	<p>NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers</p>	<p>November 2025</p>
<p>OPCS-4.11 Tables of Coding Equivalences and specification</p> <p>Released via TRUD</p>	<p>XML</p> <p>MS Excel</p> <p>PDF</p>	<p>NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers</p> <p>Data analysts</p> <p>Statisticians</p>	<p>November 2025</p>
<p>OPCS-4.11 available in the NHS Classifications Browser</p>	<p>Online</p>	<p>NHS and NHS IT System and software suppliers</p> <p>Trust IT Department managers</p> <p>Clinical coding managers</p> <p>Clinical coders</p> <p>Data analysts</p> <p>Statisticians</p>	<p>January/February 2026</p>
<p>Key Learning Points</p> <p>Available via Delen.</p>	<p>PDF</p>	<p>Clinical coding managers</p> <p>Clinical coders</p> <p>Data analysts</p> <p>Statisticians</p>	<p>January/February 2026</p>
<p>National Clinical Coding Standards – OPCS-4.11</p> <p>Available via Delen and within the NHS Classifications Browser.</p>	<p>PDF</p>	<p>Clinical coding managers</p> <p>Clinical coders</p> <p>Data analysts</p> <p>Statisticians</p>	<p>January/February 2026</p>

OPCS-4.11 specific training materials	PDF PowerPoint Word	Approved Clinical Coding Trainers Clinical coding managers Clinical coders	January/February 2026
Clinical Coding Standards Course materials Clinical Coding Standards Refresher	PDF PowerPoint Word	Approved Clinical Coding Trainers	March 2026
SNOMED CT to OPCS-4.11 cross-maps and associated documentation Released via TRUD	Tab separated text files PDF	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers	18-Feb-2026

9. Local assessment and assurance of compliance

The OPCS-4.11 Requirements Specification document describes generic tests that will demonstrate conformance to the standard.

10. NHS England maintenance and support

The Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service Helpdesk provides implementation support for classification updates and responses to queries related to OPCS-4 and ICD-10. Responses that are relevant to the wider coding community are published in the [Query Resolution Database](#). Information on our Helpdesk and the Query Resolution Database can be found on [Delen](#). See contact details below.

The Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service uses existing communication mechanisms to prepare users for the changes.

Targeted information is primarily issued in:

- Email bulletins to customers on mailing database.
- Alerts to TRUD users.
- Newsletters and Blogs posted on Delen
- Email bulletins to approved Clinical Coding Trainers and Clinical Coding Auditors.
- Briefings to coding forums / events / training courses.

10.1. Post-implementation feedback

The Data Alliance Partnership Board requires a post implementation review to be performed usually a year after implementation. This will help to identify local issues and inform improvements to subsequent releases. The Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service release Customer Survey which gathers feedback on OPCS-4 implementations and support.

10.2. Contacts

For further information about the Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service and OPCS-4.11 visit webpages:

[Clinical Classifications - NHS England Digital](#)

[Delen: Home - NHS England](#)

For classifications and coding advisory support:

Customer Portal: <https://www.support.digitalservices.nhs.uk>

Email: support.digitalservices@nhs.net

Telephone: 0300 303 5035

For further information about NHS England visit:

[NHS England](#)