

# SCCI0084: OPCS-4.8 Implementation Guidance

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This information standard (SCCI0084) has been approved for publication by the Department of Health 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 Standardisation Committee for Care Information (SCCI), a sub-group of the National Information Board.

This information standard comprises the following documents:

- Requirements Specification
- Change Paper
- Implementation Guidance.

An Information Standards Notice (SCCI0084 Amd 105/2015) has been issued as a notification of use and implementation timescales. Please read this alongside the documents for the standard.

The controlled versions of these documents can be found on the [NHS Digital 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

<b>Term / Abbreviation</b>	<b>What it stands for</b>
CCS	Clinical Classifications Service, part of NHS Digital
CDS	Commissioning Data Sets
DH	Department of Health
DSV	Delimiter Separated Values (DSV) format
HSCIC	The Health and Social Care Information Centre
HRG	Healthcare Resource Groups
ICD-10	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems - Tenth Revision
ISO 9001: 2008	An internationally recognised standard for the quality management of businesses
NCO	National Casemix Office, part of NHS Digital
NHS Digital	Provides national information, data and IT systems for health and care services, previously HSCIC
National Tariff Payment System	A set of prices and rules to help local NHS providers and commissioners provide best value to their patients produced by NHS Improvement and NHS England.
OPCS-4	The OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures - Version 4
PDF	Portable Document Format
SCCI	Standardisation Committee for Care Information
SNOMED CT	Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine Clinical Terms
SUS	Secondary Uses Service
TRUD	Technology Reference data Update Distribution Service
WHO	World Health Organisation
XML	Extensible Markup Language

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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 4.8, also known as OPCS-4.8, which will be implemented on 1 April 2017.

Section 7 of this document identifies the relevant guidance for organisations and key members of staff who are required to implement the standard. It is also recommended that the full list of resources is referenced by all users as there may be other useful information.

## 2 Summary of the standard

<b>Standard</b>	
SCCI unique identifier	SCCI0084 Amd 105/2015
Title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.8
Description	<p>OPCS-4 is a Fundamental Information Standard, mandated for use by health care providers. It is used to classify hospital interventions and surgical procedures to support various data collections for operational and secondary uses.</p> <p>The classification comprises a list of alphanumeric codes organised into mainly anatomically based chapters. It is published as a book set (Tabular List and Index) by The Stationery Office (TSO) and is also available to download as an eVersion.</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"> <li>• Admitted Patient Care Commissioning Data Sets (CDS)</li> <li>• Central Returns for secondary uses</li> <li>• Other data collections as defined in the NHS Data Model and Dictionary.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p>
<b>Release</b>	
Release title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.8 (OPCS-4.8)
Description	OPCS-4.8 contains updates submitted by the NHS, NHS Digital, DH, NHS England and other organisations via the OPCS-4 Requests Portal and released by the NHS Digital Clinical Classifications Service.
Implementation Completion date	1 April 2017

## 2.1 Related documents

Ref #	Title
1	Information Standards Notice
2	OPCS-4.8 NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request 1577
3	Summary of Changes from OPCS-4.7 to OPCS-4.8

## 2.2 Supporting documents

Ref #	Title
1	OPCS-4.8 Codes and Titles and Metadata Files with associated Technical Specification
2	National Clinical Coding Standards – OPCS-4.8 reference book

## 2.3 Related Standards

Ref #	Reference	Title
1	SCCI0021 Amd 10/2014	ICD-10 5th Edition
2	ISB 0034 Amd 26/2006	SNOMED CT
3	SCCI0034 Amd 35/2016 Publication planned for November 2016, subject to the necessary approvals.	SNOMED CT
4	SCCI0160	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems
5	SCCI0129	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 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 2017.

The OPCS-4.8 data files to support suppliers are released in two formats:

- Extensible Mark-up 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 \(SUS\)](#).

The data files must be implemented in accordance with the technical specification issued with the OPCS-4.8 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 in March and September as part of the terminology release.

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

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience to support implementation.

### 3.2 Health care providers

Health care providers must implement OPCS-4.8 data files in readiness for 1 April 2017 as described in the OPCS-4.8 Metadata file Technical Specification.

Information systems must support the coding of consultant episodes in OPCS-4.7 and OPCS-4.8 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 2017. 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-4.8 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-4.8 Implementation: Preparing for implementation](#)" is provided to support local implementers.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience to support implementation.

## 3.3 Clinical commissioning groups/Commissioning support units

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) use the OPCS-4.8 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.

Clinical Commissioning Groups will need to implement OPCS-4.8 data files on 1 April 2017 as described in the OPCS-4.8 Metadata file technical specification.

The OPCS-4.8 Table of Coding Equivalences (ToCE) data file and associated specification supports analyses between different versions across time.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience 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 Digital Clinical Classifications Service (CCS) publishes a checklist - OPCS-4.8 Implementation: Preparing for implementation - to help anyone planning for or managing the implementation in readiness for the go-live date of 1 April 2017.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience to support implementation.

### 4.2 ICT managers

ICT departments must support the day to day activities of clinical coders by enabling the successful download and installation of the OPCS-4.8 (and ICD-10) eVersion.

Electronic books and web based applications are becoming the preferred options for the publication of clinical classifications worldwide. The OPCS-4.8 eVersion replicates the "look and feel" of the print version of OPCS-4.8. It is free which will reduce the necessity to purchase hard copies and reduce local implementation costs. Feedback from coding departments suggests that some clinical coders are unable to access the eVersion and other 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-4.8.

The eVersion:

- reproduces the OPCS-4.8 Tabular List and Index in the familiar style
- has powerful search, navigation and retrieval functions
- supports the addition of notes to codes. These notes can be shared with colleagues and transferred between future OPCS-4 eVersions, thus saving time on manual transcription of notes between books

- enables coders to email directly from the eVersion to colleagues
- supports hyperlinks to documents and websites.

The eVersion is downloadable from the Technology Reference data Update Distribution (TRUD) website subject to registration and licence agreement. ICT Managers may wish to whitelist this site to enable coders to download the eVersion.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience 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-4.8 Table of Coding Equivalences (ToCE) data file and associated technical specification support analyses between different versions across time.

The OPCS-4.8 ToCE file is released with the data files via the Technology Reference data Update Distribution (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, for example, 1 January. Having a regular fixed point for changes enables analysts to extract meaningful statistics for local/national purposes, including time series data and the NHS payment system.

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

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience to support implementation.

### 4.4 Clinical coding managers/clinical coders

OPCS-4.8 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 Secondary Uses Service (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 also be used by other staff depending on local operational requirements.

Where there are terminology enabled systems in place, procedures (and diagnoses) are captured in SNOMED CT and converted to the classifications via semi-automated maps. These maps are not always 1 to 1; consequently the maps must be checked and supplemented by coders, as necessary.

An encoder, containing an electronic version of OPCS-4.8, may also be used to support the assignment of OPCS-4.8 codes.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience to support implementation.

## 4.5 Clinical coding trainers/Clinical Coding Academies

Approved clinical coding trainers and Clinical Coding Academies 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-4.8 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 CCS.

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 CCS provides national reference products and training materials to support the coding community.

See section 7 for full list of guidance and target audience 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 OPCS-4.8 volume set will be available from The Stationery Office (TSO). The cost to the NHS has yet to be decided. A discount will be available to the NHS. Currently the OPCS-4.7 volume set costs £140 without discount. Further details will be published on the CCS website and trusts canvassed for quantities.

The OPCS-4.8 eVersion is available free.

NHS Digital provides the funding for the development, maintenance and resources to support the implementation of updates to OPCS-4.8.

## 7 Retention of previous versions of OPCS-4

Organisations should retain previous versions of OPCS-4 in order 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 SCCI0084 OPCS-4.8 Change Paper

Implementation Guidance/source	Format	Audience	Release date
<a href="#">Advance Notification of Change Information Standards Notice</a> See SCCI documentation supporting standard <a href="#">here</a>	PDF	Health care providers Clinical Commissioning Groups Commissioning Support Units NHS IT system and software suppliers	6 April 2016 19 October 2016
Public consultation on Draft Summary of Changes OPCS-4.7 to OPCS-4.8 <a href="#">Online survey</a>	PDF On-line survey	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	15 July 2016
SCCI0084: OPCS-4.8 Change Requirement SCCI0084: OPCS-4.8 Requirements specification SCCI0084: OPCS-4.8 Implementation Guidance NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request	PDF	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	19 October 2016
Final Summary of Changes OPCS-4.7 to OPCS-4.8	PDF	Health care providers Clinical Commissioning Groups Commissioning Support Units NHS IT system and software suppliers Data analysts Clinical Coding Departments Clinical Coding Academies	19 October 2016
<a href="#">OPCS-4.8 Implementation: Preparing for implementation</a>	PowerPoint presentation	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	September/October 2016
OPCS-4.8 Codes and Titles Metadata files and associated specification	XML Text file PDF	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers	1 November 2016

Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>			
OPCS-4.8 Tables of Equivalences and specification Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>	XML MS Excel PDF	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers Data analysts Statisticians	1 November 2016
OPCS-4.8 Volumes 1-2 Hyperlink from the <a href="#">CSS website</a> to The Stationery Office (TSO) to be notified by eBulletin when available	Hard copy	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January 2017
OPCS-4.8 eVersion (Includes Installation Guidance and Release Note) Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>	eVersion book	NHS and NHS IT System and software suppliers Trust IT Department managers Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January 2017
<a href="#">Key Learning Points</a>	PDF	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January 2017
National Clinical Coding Standards – OPCS-4.8 reference book Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>	PDF	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January 2017
Clinical Coding Standards Course materials Clinical Coding Standards Refresher Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>	PDF PowerPoint Word	Approved Clinical Coding Trainers	January 2017
SNOMED CT to OPCS-4.8 <a href="#">cross-maps</a> and associated	Tab separated	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers	Mid-March 2017

documentation Released via TRUD	text files PDF		
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## 9 Local assessment and assurance of compliance

The OPCS-4.8 Requirements Specification document describes generic tests that will demonstrate conformance to the standard.

## 10 NHS Digital maintenance and support

The CCS – Advisory Support provides implementation support for classification updates and responses to queries related to OPCS-4 and ICD-10. See contact details below.

The CCS 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.
- Coding Clinic (technical journal) published on the website, as required.
- Email bulletins to approved Clinical Coding Trainers and Clinical Coding Auditors.
- Briefings to Clinical Coding Academies, UK Terminology Centre Implementation Forum, coding forums / events / training courses.

### 10.1 Post-implementation feedback

SCCI 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.

### 10.2 Contacts

For further information about the CCS and OPCS-4.8 visit webpages:

<http://systems.digital.nhs.uk/data/clinicalcoding>

For classifications and coding advisory support:

Tel: 0300 30 34 777

Email: [information.standards@nhs.net](mailto:information.standards@nhs.net)

For further information about NHS Digital visit:

<http://digital.nhs.uk/>

For general enquiries please call **0300 303 5678**

or email [enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk)