

SNOMED CT UK Edition ® 2020 Release Schedule

Consultation results

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Information and technology
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Background

In light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we recognised that large-scale changes to the coding framework could impose a significant assurance and change management burden on NHS system suppliers, which could delay the deployment of any care-critical COVID-19 elements.

To mitigate this we made the following adjustments to the SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) releases during February to June 2020:

- to provide a more regular deployment of SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) content
- to ensure only essential changes (such as COVID-19) were made to the SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical)

As we move out of the initial phase of the COVID-19 response there is a need to deploy both the standard SNOMED CT UK Edition content and the backlog of SNOMED CT International Editions with associated quality improvements.

In recognition of the impact this could have on NHS system suppliers we engaged and consulted with stakeholders to determine their preferred release schedule.

The two options which were presented for consultation were:

SNOMED CT UK Edition release date	Option 1	Option 2
17 June 2020	New COVID-19 content only SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical)	New COVID-19 content only SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical)
12 August 2020	Update to January and July 2019 SNOMED CT International Editions All new SNOMED UK Edition (Clinical) content originally scheduled for release on 1 April 2020 but withheld Additional COVID-19 content	New COVID-19 and other SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) content
7 October 2020	Update to January and July 2020 SNOMED CT International Editions New SNOMED CT UK (Clinical) content added since 1 April 2020 Additional COVID-19 content	Update to January and July 2019 SNOMED CT International Editions All new UK content originally scheduled for release on 1 April 2020 but withheld Additional COVID-19 content

2 December 2020	New SNOMED UK Edition (Clinical) content Additional COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 content if necessary	Update to January and July 2020 SNOMED CT International Editions) New UK content added since 1 April 2020 Additional COVID-19 content
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Results

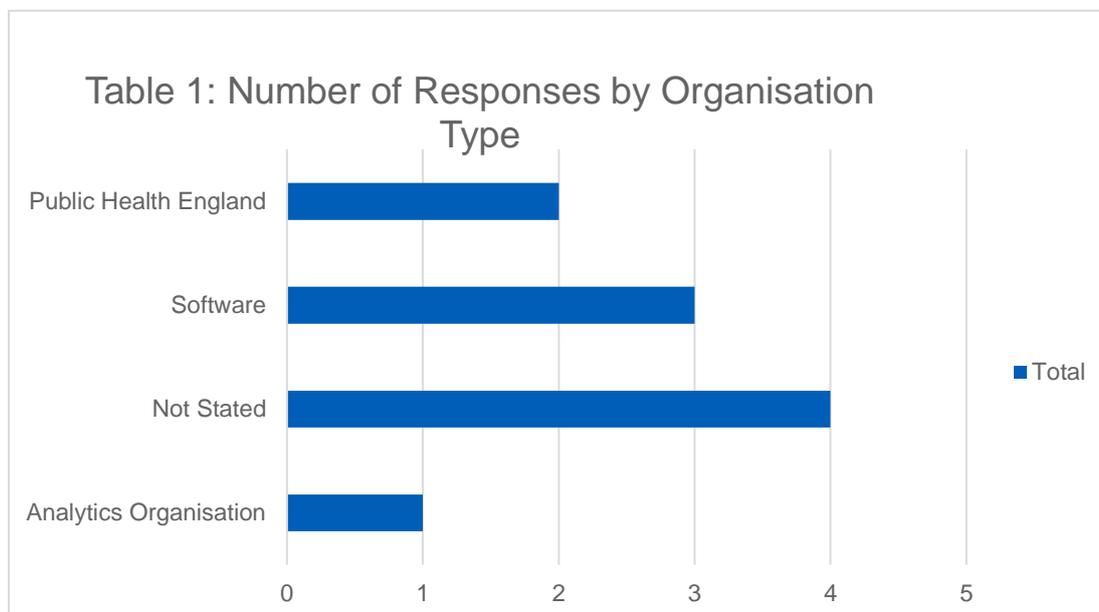
Initially we informally spoke to several key stakeholders within the NHS and Primary Care Suppliers to assess the suitability and the practicality of each option. Following this feedback (which was in favour option 1) the formal consultation ran between the 18 May 2020 and 5 June 2020 on our collaborative platform [Delen](#).

To engage with the maximum number of stakeholders we informed users subscribed to the following distribution lists:

- SNOMED CT UK Edition on the NHS Digital [Technology Reference data Update Distribution platform \(TRUD\)](#)
- Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service Newsletter

Respondents

There were ten responses to the consultation. Whilst it was not a required field the responses were received from various organisation types as per below



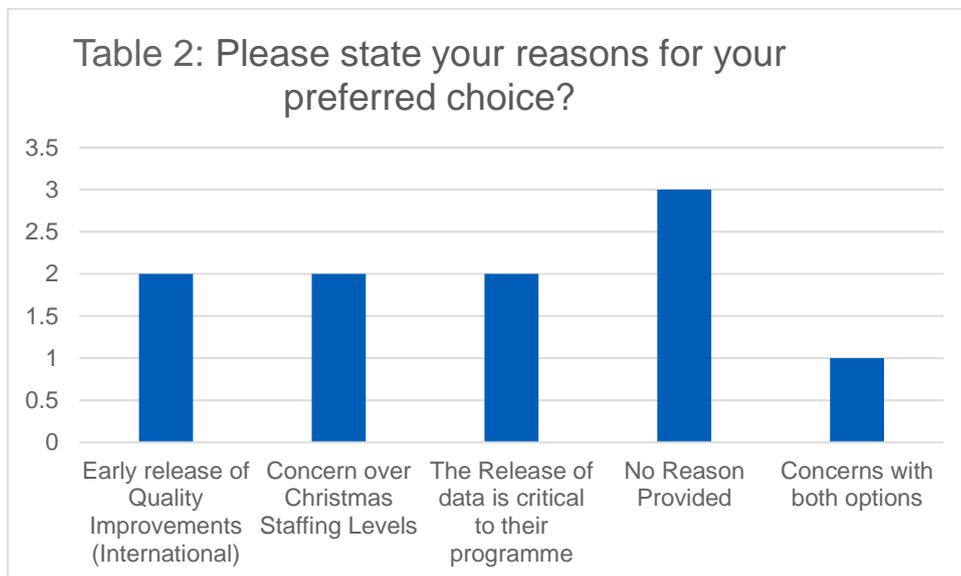
Question 1: What is your preferred release schedule for the SNOMED CT International content?

When given a choice between the two options all ten respondents (100%) stated a preference for Option 1 (i.e.2019 SNOMED CT International Edition content to be released

on 12 August and the 2020 SNOMED CT International Edition content to be released on 7 October).

It should be noted one respondent stated issues with their ability to implement both options.

Question 2 Please state your reasons for your preferred choice.



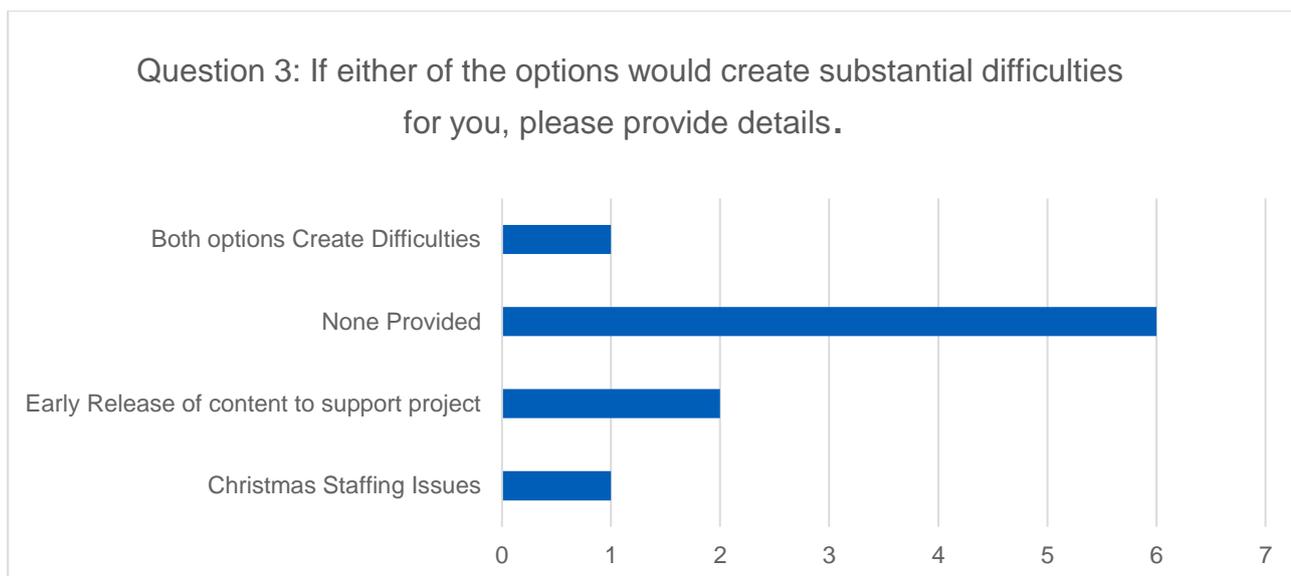
This was a free text field and the results have been summarised below, the answers can be found in Appendix 1. The most common reasons stated in favour of Option 1 were:

- an immediate need for the deployment of the quality improvements from the international releases
- early release of UK content to support active projects and programmes

Other respondents stated that a release of a large amount of changes in December might as prove problematic from a staffing perspective.

Question 3: If either of the options would create substantial difficulties for you, please provide details.

This was a free text field and the results have been summarised below, the answers can be found in Appendix 2.



A number of responders indicated that the release of SNOMED CT International content in December 2020 would cause the following problems:

- the release of the SNOMED CT International Edition during December would coincide with lower resource capacity because of the Christmas break.
- a late release of the SNOMED CT UK Edition would also delay the availability of UK level content which is critical to the delivery of national level projects and programmes including:
 - Evaluation for Severe Combined Immuno-Deficiency (SCID) within the new-born Blood Spot Screening Programme

One respondent raised concerns over the pace of both options stating that their level of SNOMED CT maturity in conjunction with the demands placed upon them by COVID-19 has reduced their capability to reconcile the large amount of changes, in particular those within the international edition. They felt that additional time would be required to inform users and provide training. It was also suggested that there should be discussions about other options such as a quarterly drop to reduce the impact on system suppliers and their users.

Question 4: Please provide us with any other feedback about the SNOMED CT UK Edition.

Other comments received with respects to SNOMED CT were for us to:

1. communicate and commit to timescales to switch to the new SNOMED CT RF2 File types (currently in Beta)
2. further engage with respect to approval of the changes to the New-born Blood Spot Screening Programme by the Data Standards Assurance Services (DSAS).

Steps Forward

As per the results of this consultation the planned timetable for the releases of the SNOMED CT UK Clinical Edition during 2020 is detailed below:

SNOMED CT UK Edition release date	SNOMED CT UK Edition release content
17 June 2020	New COVID-19 UK Edition content
24 June	Additional preview release distributed on TRUD as a snapshot file with the 2019 SNOMED CT Clinical and Drug release data (with no cross maps or refsets due to technical constraints).
12 August 2020	Update to January and July 2019 SNOMED CT International Editions All new SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) content originally scheduled for release on April 1st but withheld, New SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) content authored since 17 th June. Additional COVID-19 content
7 October 2020	Update to January and July 2020 SNOMED CT International Editions New SNOMED CT UK Edition (Clinical) content added since 12 August 2020 Additional COVID-19 content
2 December 2020	New UK Edition content Additional COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related content
*If there is an immediate need for COVID-19 content this will be distributed in line with the SNOMED CT Drug Extension timescale (four weekly).	

SNOMED CT UK Edition Beta Format

To reduce the immediate burden on suppliers we will migrate to SNOMED CT UK Edition beta format by the First Quarter 1 2021 (around April 2021)).

We will seek feedback from stakeholders later this year to identify:

- if any technical improvements can be made to the [SNOMED CT UK Edition Beta Format](#)
- how we can support stakeholders as they transition to the [SNOMED CT UK Edition Beta Format](#)

Direct feedback or engagement

We will contact respondents who asked for direct feedback or engagement within their programme of work.

Appendix 1: Full text responses to Question 2- Please state your reasons for your preferred choice?

Some names and organisations have been redacted with respects to commercial sensitivities and GDPR. The names of Public Sector Organisations have not been redacted for purposes of transparency.

“Considerable amount of improved / helpful International content in these four releases - the sooner we see this the better!

Fewer people/person available in December to assimilate data - shorter working month in December. PLUS, likely to be increased annual leave due to lockdown related delays in taking annual leave. Thank you.”

“Neither option has a material impact on us at this point.”

"The summer holiday season will not be as usual this year. it is better to get the second update earlier in the year and away from Christmas else it will drag on into January."

“Prefer sooner dates to align with international edition”

“We're getting quite far behind the international release and need to catch up as soon as we can. We can handle the updates in one hit this way as well.”

“The August release will enable the progress of codes to CHIS suppliers for the Evaluation for Severe Combined Immuno-Deficiency (SCID). The evaluation which has been commissioned by NHSE/I and requested by PHE following the review of evidence will enable the National Screening Committee to evaluate the evidence for the addition of a further condition to be added to the New-born Blood Spot Screening Programme. The evaluation includes a number of complex and detailed subgroups with targeted timescales and the use of considerable resources some of which are already in place”

“Urgently need SCID codes in August release for pre-analytical clinical evaluation of SCID New-born blood spot screening”

"An impact assessment has been conducted involving those in [REDACTED] from the SNOMED CT programme. Unfortunately, both of these options raise concerns from [REDACTED] which we would welcome a conversation about. We have ticked option only so the form would submit."

Appendix 2: Full text responses to Question 3- If either of the options would create substantial difficulties for you, please provide details

Some names and organisations have been redacted to ensure compliance with GDPR. The names of Public Sector Organisations have not been redacted for purposes of transparency.

“It would be trickier for Public Health England vaccination monitoring purposes to have it closer to Christmas. Also, the impact of implementing changes would be closer to the March year end with less time for practices to adapt.”

“No”

"Yes, as before the delay in reporting of results for SCID will impact on the results being relayed to parents. Delays will prevent the evaluation of the project progressing and in the pre go live stage starting in September the Laboratories will be unable to test the end to end process for the testing and reporting of samples. Potential delays to the reporting of results for SCID and the option to delay the go live date for due to SNOMED release dates has been added to the SCID risk register and escalated to the SCID Project Board."

“Major risk to the National SCID evaluation if codes not provided in August release”

"We need to fully understand the volume, complexity and detail of what is changing in order to impact assess further. Until we deploy the tools in [REDACTED] to aid users in dealing with description change and Concept retirement affecting many clinical artefacts, along with implementing the Query and History of Substitutions table then the impact of retired content arising from the International release may be significant on the user base. We would need to inform users of what is coming and provide training and timescales to allow planning. This year is particularly challenging and [REDACTED] has been altered due to the impact of Covid-19."

Appendix 3: Full text responses to Question 4- Please provide us with any other feedback about the SNOMED CT UK Edition

Also interested in the revised timetable for switching to the new module/distribution file RF2/ sunsetting of old RF2 distribution - originally scheduled for April 2020. Thank you.