

# **DAPB0084: OPCS-4.10 Implementation Guidance**

**Published 1 November 2022**

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# 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 Standards Assurance Service (DSAS) and endorsed by the Data Alliance Partnership Sub Board (DAPSB).

This information standard comprises the following documents:

- Change Specification
- Implementation Guidance
- Requirements Specification.

An Information Standards Notice (DAPB0084 Amd 36/2022) 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 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.

Date of publication: 1 November 2022



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## Glossary of Terms

<b>Term / Abbreviation</b>	<b>What it stands for</b>
CDS	Commissioning Data Sets
DAPB	Data Alliance Partnership Board
Delen	The information sharing and collaboration platform for users of our Terminology and Classifications products. Providing access up-to-date information, resources, education materials and technical support relating to our core products.
ICD-10	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems - Tenth Revision
NHS Digital	Provides national information, data and IT systems for health and care services, previously The Health and Social Care Information Centre (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
SUS	Secondary Uses Service
TRUD	Technology Reference data Update Distribution Service
TSO	The Stationary Office
XML	Extensible Markup Language

## 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 4.10, also known as OPCS-4.10, on 1 April 2023.

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.

## Summary of the standard

Standard	
DAPB unique identifier	DAPB0084 Amd 36/2022
Title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.10
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 Classifications Browser and downloadable as an eVersion. It is published as a book set (Tabular List and Index) by The Stationery Office (TSO) for purchase by users.</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"> <li>Admitted Patient Care Commissioning Data Sets (CDS)</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>

Release	
Release title	OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.10 (OPCS-4.10)
Description	OPCS-4.10 contains updates submitted by the NHS, NHS Digital, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and other organisations via the OPCS-4 Requests Portal and released by the NHS Digital Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service.
Implementation Completion date	1 April 2023

## Related documents

Ref #	Title
1	<a href="#">OPCS-4.10 Information Standards Notice</a>
2	<a href="#">OPCS-4.10 NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request</a>
3	<a href="#">Summary of Core Changes from OPCS-4.9 to OPCS-4.10</a>
4	<a href="#">OPCS-4.10 Requirements Specification</a>
5	<a href="#">OPCS-4.10 Change Specification</a>

## Supporting Information

Ref #	Title
1	<a href="#">OPCS-4.10 Codes and Titles with associated Technical Specification</a>
2	<a href="#">National Clinical Coding Standards – OPCS-4.10 reference book</a>

## Related Standards

Ref #	Reference	Title
1	<a href="#">SCCI0021</a>	ICD-10 5th Edition
2	<a href="#">SCCI0034</a>	SNOMED CT
3	<a href="#">DCB0160</a>	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems
4	<a href="#">DCB0129</a>	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Manufacture of Health IT Systems

# Guidance for organisations

## 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 2023.

The OPCS-4.10 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 Digital Terminology Server](#).

The data files must be implemented in accordance with the technical specification issued with the OPCS-4.10 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](#).

## Health care providers

Health care providers must implement OPCS-4.10 data files in readiness for 1 April 2023 as described in the OPCS-4.10 Metadata file Technical Specification.

Information systems must support the coding of Care Professional Admitted Care Episodes in OPCS-4.9 and OPCS-4.10 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 2023. 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-4.10 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-4.10 Implementation: Preparing for implementation](#)” is provided to support local implementers.

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

## Clinical Commissioning Groups/Commissioning Support Units

Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) use the OPCS-4.10 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.

Integrated Care Boards will need to implement OPCS-4.10 data files on 1 April 2023 as described in the OPCS-4.10 Metadata file technical specification.

The OPCS-4.10 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](#).

## Key staff involved in implementation

### 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 Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service publishes a checklist - [OPCS-4.10 Implementation: Preparing for implementation](#) - to help anyone planning for or managing the implementation in readiness for the go-live date of 1 April 2023.

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

### ICT managers

ICT departments must support the day to day activities of clinical coders by enabling access to the Classifications Browser OPCS-4.10 (and ICD-10).

Electronic books and web-based applications are becoming the preferred options for the publication of clinical classifications worldwide. The NHS Digital Classifications Browser contains OPCS-4.10. The Browser replicates the "look and feel" of the print version of OPCS-4.

The Browser is free to access from any computer with an internet connection and the eVersion is free to download from TRUD reducing the necessity to purchase hard copies and to reduce 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-4.10.

More information the the Classifications Browser and eVersion can be found here.

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

## 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-4.10 Table of Coding Equivalences (ToCE) data file and associated technical specification support analyses between different versions across time.

The OPCS-4.10 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, 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 coded. Inaccurate data places the trust at risk of incorrect payment and distorted clinical outcome indicators.

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

## Clinical coding managers/clinical coders

OPCS-4.10 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-4.10 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](#).

## 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-4.10 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](#).

## 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.

## 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-4.10 volume set will be available from The Stationery Office (TSO). The cost and any discount available to the NHS has yet to be decided. Currently the OPCS-4.9 volume set costs £150 without discount (a 70% discount is available for NHS). Further details will be published on Delen.

The NHS Digital Classifications Browser is free.

NHS Digital provides the funding for the development, maintenance and resources to support the implementation of updates to OPCS-4.10.

## Retention of previous versions of OPCS-4

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

## Full list of guidance to support implementation

Note: you may find it useful to refer to the implementation plan in the DAPB0084 OPCS-4.10 Change Paper

Implementation Guidance/source	Format	Audience	Release date
Notification of Change See DAPB documentation supporting standard <a href="#">here</a>	Newsletter	Health care providers Integrated Care Boards Commissioning Support Units NHS IT system and software suppliers	March 2021
Public consultation on Draft Summary of Changes OPCS-4.9 to OPCS-4.10	PDF On-line survey	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	20 June 2022 – 29 July 2022
Information Standards Notice DAPB0084: OPCS-4.10 Change Paper DAPB0084: OPCS-4.10 Requirements Specification DAPB0084: OPCS-4.10 Implementation Guidance NHS Data Model and Dictionary Change Request See DAPB documentation supporting standard <a href="#">here</a>	PDF	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	November 2022
Final Summary of Changes OPCS-4.9 to OPCS-4.10 See DAPB documentation supporting standard <a href="#">here</a>	PDF	Health care providers Integrated Care Boards Commissioning Support Units NHS IT system and software suppliers Data analysts Clinical Coding Departments Clinical Coding Academies	November 2022
OPCS-4.10 Implementation: <a href="#">Preparing for implementation</a> Available via <a href="#">Delen</a> .	PowerPoint presentation	Anyone involved in implementing the standard	November 2022

Implementation Guidance/source	Format	Audience	Release date
OPCS-4.10 Codes and Titles Metadata files and associated specification Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a> and the <a href="#">NHS Digital Terminology Server</a>	XML Text file PDF FHIR®	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers	November 2022
OPCS-4.10 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	November 2022
OPCS-4.10 Volumes 1-2 Available to purchase from The Stationery Office (TSO).	Hard copy	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January/February 2023
OPCS-4.10 available in the Classifications Browser and eVersion	Online	NHS and NHS IT System and software suppliers Trust IT Department managers Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January/February 2023
<a href="#">Key Learning Points</a> Available via <a href="#">Delen</a> .	PDF	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January/February 2023
National Clinical Coding Standards – OPCS-4.10 reference book Available via <a href="#">Delen</a> and within the Classifications Browser.	PDF	Clinical coding managers Clinical coders Clinical Coding Academies Data analysts Statisticians	January/February 2023

Implementation Guidance/source	Format	Audience	Release date
Clinical Coding Standards Course materials Clinical Coding Standards Refresher Available via <a href="#">Delen</a>	PDF PowerPoint Word	Approved Clinical Coding Trainers	January/February 2023
SNOMED CT to OPCS-4.10 <a href="#">cross-maps</a> and associated documentation Released via <a href="#">TRUD</a>	Tab separated text files  PDF	NHS and NHS IT system and software suppliers	22-Feb-2023

## Local assessment and assurance of compliance

The OPCS-4.10 Requirements Specification document describes generic tests that will demonstrate conformance to the standard.

## NHS Digital 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 at [https://hscic.kahootz.com/connect.ti/t\\_c\\_home/view?objectId=357060&exp=e1](https://hscic.kahootz.com/connect.ti/t_c_home/view?objectId=357060&exp=e1). 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.

## 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 a yearly Customer Survey which gathers feedback on OPCS-4 implementations and support.

## Contacts

For further information about the Terminology and Classifications Delivery Service and OPCS-4.10 visit webpages:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/services/terminology-and-classifications/clinical-classifications>

[https://hscic.kahootz.com/connect.ti/t\\_c\\_home/groupHome](https://hscic.kahootz.com/connect.ti/t_c_home/groupHome)

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/>

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