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National Clinical Terminology Service Request Submission Guidelines for Terminology Products

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Document information

Key information

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document provides guidance on how to submit a request to the National Clinical Terminology Service (NCTS), operated by the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency) for the creation, modification, or inactivation of clinical terminology content.

1.2 Intended audience

This document is intended for those in the clinical terminology user community who have an interest in the creation or modification of the terminology products published by the NCTS.

1.3 Overview

The NCTS is committed to the refinement and improvement of our terminology products – the Australian Medicines Terminology (AMT) and SNOMED CT-AU. We are also committed to contributing to the refinement and improvement of SNOMED CT^{®1}, which is managed in Australia by the NCTS on behalf of the IHTSDO.

We provide an online [Request Submission page](#)² for all Australian licence holders³, which enables the Australian clinical terminology user community to log requests for the creation, modification, or inactivation of terminology content.

Terminology development requires the input, motivation and cooperation of our stakeholders. To guide the successful development and adoption of our terminology products, the NCTS will therefore influence and be influenced by the approach, requirements and actions of its stakeholders.

1.3.1 Request submission process

The request submission process is designed to ensure a consistent approach when managing requests for additional content, changes to existing content, errors or other issues with the AMT, SNOMED CT-AU or SNOMED CT.

The objective of the process is to maintain the clinical relevancy, usefulness, understandability and applicability of these terminology products. These products support clinical care and communication exchange by representing a standardised language of health care.

¹ “SNOMED” and “SNOMED CT” are registered trademarks of the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO).

² <https://www.healthterminologies.gov.au/ncts/#/request>

³ See the “Licensing” page on the NCTS website: <https://www.healthterminologies.gov.au/ncts/#/learn>

2 Guidelines for submitting a request

2.1 Overview

Terminology content evolves with each release, and each new release includes several additions and modifications to the core content. The types of changes made include new concepts, new descriptions, new relationships between concepts, new maps, and new reference sets, as well as updates and retirements of any of these components.

Drivers of these changes include priorities as determined by the IHTSDO; changes in understanding of health and disease processes; introduction of drugs by the Therapeutic Goods Administration; introduction of new investigations, therapies and procedures; as well as proposals and work provided by IHTSDO member nations, national release centres, and other partners and licensees.

2.2 Criteria to consider when submitting a request

Requests will be assessed for compliance with the following criteria. Please consider these criteria and address them in the relevant section of the "Business reason for request" form:

- 1 Does the request fit within the scope of the terminology?⁴
- 2 Does the request overlap with existing content?
- 3 Does the request consider the impact on the underlying concept model?
- 4 Is the request of national relevance or international relevance?
- 5 Is the request supported by evidence of the need for this modification?
- 6 How does the request introduce new terminology of clinical relevance, reproducibility, understandability, acceptability and usefulness?
- 7 If the request requires definition or textual explanation (perhaps in a style guide) to ensure correct usage, has this definition or explanation been provided?
- 8 Does the request include supporting documentation such as:
 - a journal articles;
 - b references to clinical texts;
 - c internet addresses (URLs);
 - d data supporting frequency of use or need; or
 - e Product Information/Consumer Medicines Information (PI/CMI) leaflets?

⁴ For SNOMED CT and SNOMED CT-AU refer to the *SNOMED CT Editorial Guide* [1]; for the AMT refer to the *AMT Concept Model and Business Use Cases* [2].

2.3 How to submit a request

The NCTS provides an online [Request Submission page](#)⁵ that enables the customer to log requests for the creation or modification of terminology content via the NCTS website.

For **single requests**, complete the online form on the request submission page. After submitting the request, you will receive an email requesting you to follow up with any supporting documentation, if available.

For **batch requests**, download the Batch Request Submission Template (hereafter: the Template) from the request submission page, and complete the mandatory information as required. The completed Template and any supporting documentation should be emailed to help@digitalhealth.gov.au. See Section 3 for further guidance.

The NCTS will assess your request and, where appropriate, approve and act upon it or submit it to the IHTSDO for action.

All requests will be reviewed and assessed for validity. A confirmation will be provided to you before escalating for action by the NCTS or the IHTSDO. Please note that if the request is not approved, a notification and business reason will be provided to you by the NCTS.

2.4 Time frames to consider

The NCTS endeavours to address request submissions in a timely manner. The following dates are intended as a guide only, with dates subject to change. Due to the time taken between the request being received and variability of request complexity, requests may not always appear in the release immediately following the date of approval.

2.4.1 SNOMED CT-AU

SNOMED CT-AU (which is inclusive of the AMT) is released monthly.

Requests need to be received by the end of the month to be considered for the following month's release.

2.4.2 SNOMED CT and

The international release of SNOMED CT is distributed at the end of January and July each year, with content closure typically being at the end of November and May respectively. The time taken before requests appear in the international release is dependent upon IHTSDO processes.

⁵ <https://www.healthterminologies.gov.au/ncts/#/request>

3 Template guidance

3.1 Overview

The Template has been developed to allow customers to compile multiple requests for the creation, modification or inactivation of AMT, SNOMED CT or SNOMED CT-AU content.

3.2 Worksheets in the Template

The template consists of the following worksheets:

- Instructions
- New Concept
- New Synonym
- New Relationship
- New AMT Product
- Modify Description
- Modify Relationship
- Modify reference set members
- Other

3.3 Completing the Template

Guidance on each of the fields is found within the worksheets.

To create a request, select the worksheet corresponding with the type of request being submitted. Each request should be contained in one row of the worksheet. Multiple types of requests can be included using the various worksheets within one spreadsheet.

Columns with red headings are mandatory fields. Please provide as much information as possible.

Most columns support free text entry, but the following require selection from a drop-down menu:

- Semantic Tag
- Relationship Type
- Type of change
- Type of modification

Once the template is complete it should be emailed to help@digitalhealth.gov.au, along with any supporting documentation.

4 Supporting documentation

4.1 SNOMED CT requests

Where possible, supporting documentation should be provided by the requester to assist with the processing of requests. This may take the form of journal articles, clinical texts, or websites.

Please attach any supporting documentation with the request via the Request Submission page.

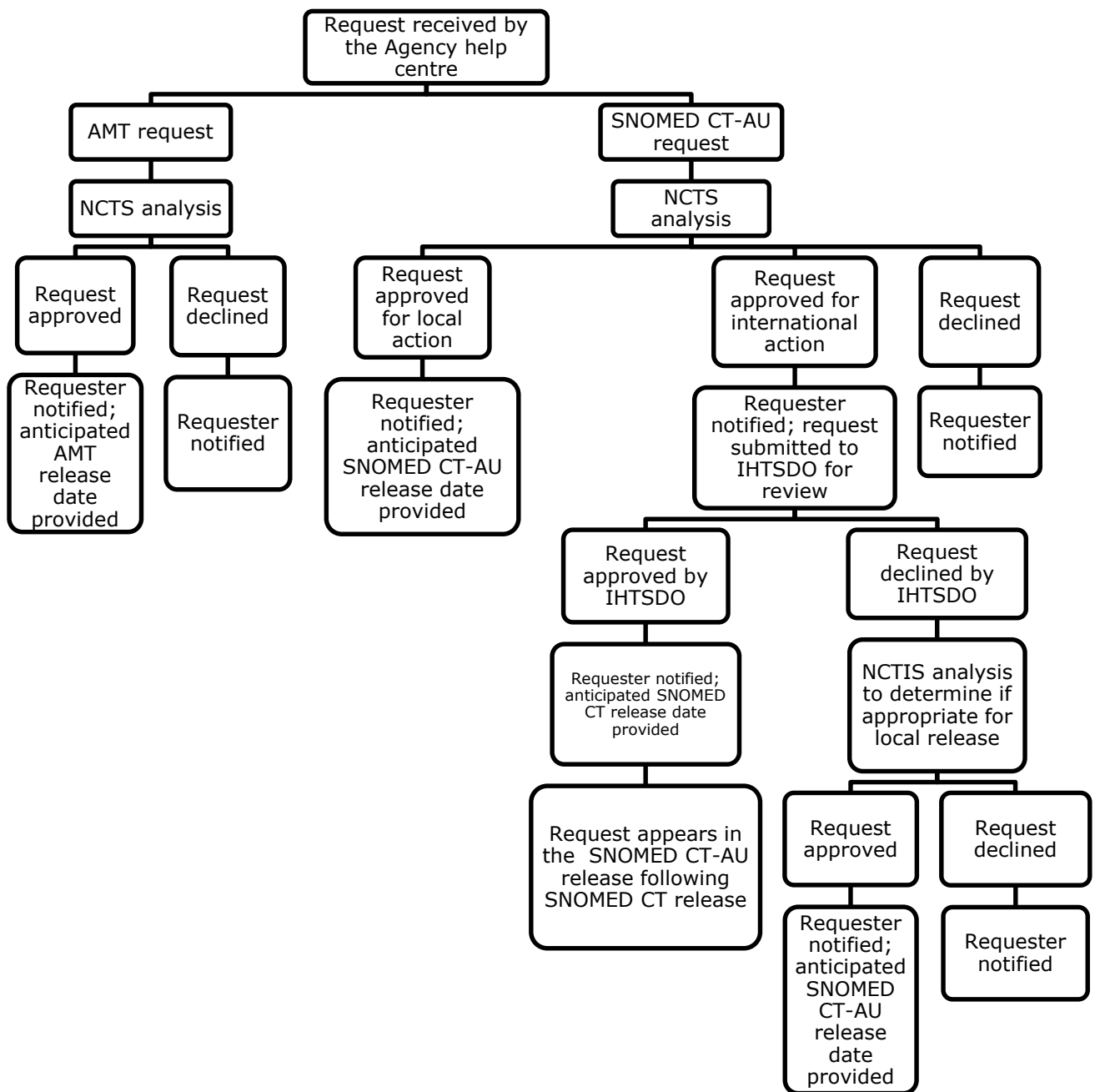
4.2 AMT requests

The NCTS asks that all requests for the addition of products to the AMT be supported by:

- Product Information/Consumer Medicines Information (PI/CMI) leaflets; and
- Images of all components of the product, with the labels clearly visible.

Please attach these files with the requests via the Request Submission page.

Appendix A Request submission process diagram



Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AMT	Australian Medicines Terminology
CMI	Consumer Medicines Information
NCTS	National Clinical Terminology Service
PI	Product Information
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

References

1. IHTSDO. *SNOMED CT Editorial Guide*. Copenhagen: IHTSDO; 2015. January 2015 release. Available from: <http://www.snomed.org/doc>.
2. NEHTA. *AMT Concept Model and Business Use Cases*. Sydney: NEHTA; 2016. v2.0. Available from: <https://www.healthterminologies.gov.au>.