The Digital Future of WHO Classifications

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Abstract

WHO maintains classifications that are crucial for the functioning of the healthcare systems worldwide, namely ICD (International Classification of Diseases), ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) and the upcoming ICHI (International Classification of Health Interventions).
The traditional way of making classifications available to their audience was based on printed books, which in turn shaped their usage in health information systems. However, in the recent years and specifically with the development of ICD 11th Revision (ICD-11), a shift towards full integration with computerized systems has been designed and implemented. So, nowadays the official distribution of ICD-11 is no more based on a 3 books set, but on a computerized platform that includes an API, a Javascript toolkit for embedding classifications in health information systems, a browser for navigating the classification and other tools, all oriented towards multilinguality and openness. Furthermore, the architecture of ICD-11 itself is more modern and includes a foundation layer on which the proper Mortality and Morbidity Statistics Classification is built upon. Since the last year, the same technological approach has been extended to the other two classifications, which now share the same platform and approach. This talk will explore the approach and novelties that characterize the digital path undertaken by WHO for its classifications, and its impact on future digital systems.

Keywords: International Classification of Diseases (ICD); Digital Systems; Healthcare Systems.