
HIS Standards Process

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Status:	Adopted Standard
Purpose:	Describes how versions of registries and documents attain the status of being a standard of the HIS community.
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1. Introduction

It is through documents that HIS defines itself and the practices that it promotes. This document defines the standards process by which the HIS community develops and adopts those authoritative documents. After defining membership in the HIS community, this document defines the types of documents that are managed under this process and defines the life cycle process by which documents and their revisions attain official status within the community. A final section addresses the special case of updates to the code sets within HIS registries.

2. The HIS community

This standards process depends on the formal definition and enumeration of three entities within the HIS community:

HIS Stewards	A HIS Steward is an organization that maintains a registry of code sets that has been adopted for use within the HIS community. (Registries are adopted following this process and managed following the process defined in <i>HIS Registry Standards</i>).
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HIS Registrar	The HIS Registrar is the person who facilitates the execution of the process documented here, as appointed by and on behalf of the HIS Stewards.
Registered Users	A Registered User is an organization that is using at least one of the HIS registries for coding some of its information and that has registered its use of the registry with the HIS Registrar.

Note that in both cases, the members are organizations rather than individuals. When a steward or user is enrolled with the HIS Registrar, the name and email address of two contact persons is provided (a primary participant and a key administrator who oversees the organization's participation). The HIS Registrar will maintain a mailing list of the HIS Stewards and the Registered Users and will send notification to these groups (as indicated in section 4 below) when conducting the business of the community.

The basic function of the HIS Stewards in this standards process is to serve as the decision-making authority on behalf of the whole community. When the HIS Stewards decide on the status of a registry or document it shall be by consensus of the group; consensus will be taken to mean that no more than one steward objects to a proposal.

The basic function of the Registered Users in this standards process is to vet all new standards and changes to existing standards. This is because those who are implementing the standards of the HIS community are the ones who have the biggest stake in the content of those standards. Thus they will be given opportunity to review every proposal that comes before the HIS Stewards. Though only two contact persons are registered for each participating organization, they are not the only ones who may give feedback in response to a call for review. Contact persons are encouraged to forward communications from the HIS Registrar to any within their organizations for whom they are relevant.

3. Types of documents

The documents published by the HIS community are of four types:

Registry	The documentation for a collection of code sets and related information that support the uniform coding of categories from a single domain or a closely related group of domains. (The <i>HIS Registry Standards</i> describe requirements on the content of such documents.)
Standard	A definition held in common that supports the functioning of the HIS community or the interoperation of information within it. A standard is a specification that community members must follow in order to function as part of the community.

Recommendation	A document similar in content to a standard, but which community members are encouraged, but not required, to follow.
Note	A document published by the HIS community that is not one of the above types. One purpose of notes is to ensure that standards and recommendations stay focused on rules and principles. Extended discussion of historical background, or rationales, of alternatives that were not chosen, or of implementation details should be treated separately in supporting notes.

4. The document life cycle

This standards process defines how documents get endorsed and published by the HIS community. This involves moving through a life cycle that has six possible status categories. Each status is defined in terms of the activities that are required for advancing it to the next status.

Draft	A document has draft status as soon as it is written. Any individual or group may draft a document that they intend to submit to the HIS Stewards for consideration to be adopted as a community document. When the creators of the document feel it is ready for consideration by the HIS Stewards, they submit it to the HIS Registrar. The document achieves <i>Proposed</i> status when the HIS Registrar agrees that it is ready for consideration by the HIS Stewards.
Proposed	When a document achieves Proposed status, the HIS Registrar circulates it to the HIS Stewards with a specific deadline for review. During that review period any steward may solicit feedback from particular users they know to be a significant stakeholder and enter their responses into the discussion. At the end of the review period, the HIS Stewards may determine that the document should be withdrawn from the process, should be revised and submitted again for review as a Proposed document, or is ready (possibly with minor revision) to be advanced to <i>Candidate</i> status.
Candidate	When a document achieves Candidate status, the HIS Stewards deem that it is in a state that is suitable for adoption. However, before that step is taken, the HIS Registrar submits the document to the entire group of Registered Users with a call for review. A specific deadline for submitting feedback should be communicated in the call for review. The review period may range from one to three months. A reminder will be sent out one week prior to the close of the review period. In the case of a review period longer than one month, a monthly reminder will be sent as well. In processing the feedback, the HIS Stewards may determine that the

document is ready (possibly with minor revision) to be advanced to *Adopted* status, that it should be revised and reviewed again in Candidate status, or that deep enough reworking is required that it should be revised and submitted again for review as a Proposed document.

- Adopted** A document may remain in the Adopted status for an indefinite period. It may be revised without changing status if the updates are simply editorial; substantive changes should be handled as a new version of the document, which is submitted to the review process described here. An Adopted document's status remains as Adopted until the HIS Stewards make a decision to move it to *Superseded* or *Retired* status.
- Superseded** A document is automatically Superseded by the adoption of a newer version of the same document.
- Retired** The status of a document changes to Retired when the HIS Stewards determine that it is no longer relevant for the community. The proposal to move a document from Adopted to Retired status should first be submitted for review by the Registered Users. As described for the transition from Candidate status to Adopted status, the HIS Registrar will send out a call for review on the proposal that the document be retired.