

# Training and Certification to Promote High-Quality Data

## What is the WHO-FIC Network?

The WHO Collaborating Centers for the Family of International Classifications (FIC) are an international network of expert centers in health classifications, coding and terminology development. The mission of the WHO-FIC Network is to improve health through the ongoing development of an integrated suite of health classifications and related products that produce information of value and utility across the world. The principal role of the WHO-FIC network is to promote the implementation and use of the Family of International Classifications in health information systems, with focus on two WHO reference classifications, the International Statistical Classification of Diseases (ICD) and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

<http://www.who.int/classifications>

## What is IFHRO?

The International Federation of Health Records Organizations (IFHRO) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in official relations with the WHO. IFHRO is an organization of health records associations in different countries, as well as individual members, that come together to advance communications and understanding among health information management (HIM) professionals. A goal of IFHRO is to assist developing nations with improving their HIM practices.

[www.ifhro.org](http://www.ifhro.org)

## What is the Joint Collaboration?

The WHO-FIC Education Committee (EC) and IFHRO established the Joint Collaboration (JC) in 2004, to further advance coding practice via international training and certification. Goals are to improve the quality of mortality and morbidity data, and the competence of ICD coders, and thus their status. The JC has awarded certificates in underlying cause-of-death coding to experienced coders in several countries, who were successful in completion of pilot exams. Such certificates were awarded in Korea, Canada, the UK and the US. The concept of a similar program for morbidity coders is under consideration and investigation. Resources are continually being sought for further project work.

## Recognition of Training Materials

Countries who have current training material on mortality coding submit such materials to the JC for evaluation. If the materials meet the international standard for underlying cause-of-death coder training established by the JC, the countries receive appropriate recognition for the materials. Training materials from Australia, U.S., Korea and Sri Lanka have been recognized.

## Recognition of Trainers

The JC also recognizes with appropriate certificates those experienced educators/coders who submit assessment materials and successfully complete an expanded underlying cause-of-death pilot coding examination. The educators/coders who have been recognized are listed on the IFHRO website as approved trainers of new

coders who wish to improve their skills and possibly seek certification by the WHO-FIC-IFHRO partnership.

### **On-line education in ICD and ICF**

The EC and JC have developed core curricula for training ICD-10 mortality and morbidity coders and also developed a core curriculum for certifiers of underlying cause of death. These curricula became the framework for development of a web-based training tool for ICD-10 coding and certification of cause-of-death by WHO, in cooperation with the EC, JC and several Collaborating Centres.

The EC and WHO-FIC Network Functioning and Disability Reference Group similarly developed ICF Curriculum Modules, and Version 1 of the Modules is guiding development of an eLearning Tool for ICF.

The JC is working with WHO in reviewing these on-line education programs to improve knowledge of ICD-10 and ICF. These Reference Classifications are used in hospitals, health and community services, statistical agencies, and for research purposes to describe the morbidity, mortality and disability of individuals and populations.

Other Information Sheets outline other classification-related topics, including clinical documentation and uses of coded data.

In 2010, the WHO-FIC Education Committee merged with the WHO-FIC Implementation Committee. The Joint Collaboration is continuing to work with this new Committee. The aim of the WHO-FIC Education and Implementation Committee (EIC) is to assist and advise WHO and the WHO-FIC Network in implementing the WHO Family of International Classifications and improving the level and quality of their use in Member States. The goal is to ensure standardized, high quality coding of health data for comparability within and among WHO Member States.

EIC activities and initiatives focus on facilitating ICD-10 and ICF implementation by supporting standardized educational materials and training and encouraging the development and sharing of best practices.

Other WHO-FIC Committees and Reference Groups include: Family Development, Informatics and Terminology, and Update and Revision Committees, and Functioning and Disability, Mortality and Morbidity Reference Groups.

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This document has been produced by the *WHO Family of International Classifications Network* and the *Joint Collaboration with the International Federation of Health Records Organizations*.