

Briefing Note for the Member Forum, Content Managers Advisory Group, Clinical Leads and Community of Practice 8 September 2025

Inactivation of Acute angle-closure glaucoma concepts

Version 1.0

Informational only

Purpose

Based on discussion and agreement at the Eye Care Clinical Reference Group, this briefing note is to inform the SNOMED CT community of the planned inactivation of 30041005 |Acute angle-closure glaucoma (disorder)| and its subtypes.

Background

Requests were received from the Royal College of Ophthalmologists (via UKTC) to inactivate a group of concepts currently represented in SNOMED CT as “Acute angle-closure glaucoma.” The requested changes affect the following concepts:

- 30041005 |Acute angle-closure glaucoma (disorder)|
- 347381000119106 |Bilateral acute angle-closure glaucoma (disorder)|
- 336611000119109 |Acute angle-closure glaucoma of right eye (disorder)|
- 342221000119104 |Acute angle-closure glaucoma of left eye (disorder)|

The proposal has been reviewed and is supported by the Eye Care Clinical Reference Group.

Issues

Specialist consensus indicates that the inclusion of “glaucoma” in these terms is inaccurate.

- “Acute” refers specifically to the sudden closure of the anterior chamber angle.
- This event may cause a rise in intraocular pressure, but it does not imply that glaucoma (i.e. optic nerve disease) is present.
- In most cases, optic nerve damage cannot be assessed at the time of the acute episode.

Although the phrase “acute angle-closure glaucoma” is found in some textbooks and literature, it is considered a misnomer. Continuing to use it risks perpetuating an incorrect diagnostic label. “Acute angle-closure glaucoma” is not a valid standalone diagnostic entity — it mixes the acute event with optic nerve disease inappropriately. If both are present, they should be coded separately:

- 1111451000000106 [Acute angle closure (disorder)] for the acute event, and
- The appropriate glaucoma diagnosis (e.g. primary open-angle glaucoma or primary angle-closure glaucoma) for the underlying optic nerve disease.

Supporting Evidence

The following societies and guidelines use the term “acute angle closure” rather than “acute angle-closure glaucoma”:

- American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO):
 - o [AAO \(2013 by a glaucoma specialist\)](#)
 - o [AAO \(2021 by a glaucoma specialist\)](#)
 - o [AAO Primary Angle-Closure Disease Preferred Practice Pattern \(2021\)](#)
 - o [Glaucoma UK \(patient support charity\)](#)

Additionally:

- European Glaucoma Society Terminology and Guidelines for Glaucoma (2020): exclusively refers to *acute angle closure*, with no mention of *acute angle-closure glaucoma*.
- Royal College of Ophthalmologists – Management of Angle Closure Glaucoma Guideline (2020): uses *acute angle closure* consistently, without reference to *acute angle-closure glaucoma*.
- Asia-Pacific Glaucoma Guidelines (2016): similarly use *acute angle closure* without mentioning *acute angle-closure glaucoma*.

Next steps

Consensus has been reached to:

- Inactivate the four “Acute angle-closure glaucoma” concepts as erroneous.
- Use the existing concept 1111451000000106 [Acute angle closure (disorder)] as the correct representation and target for the inactivated concepts.
- Add “acute angle closure attack” and “acute angle closure crisis” as synonyms to that concept to reflect clinical usage.

Release date

The changes will be implemented in Q4 2025.

Approvals	Date	Name
Chief Terminologist	Aug 25, 2025	James T. Case
Director of Content and Mapping	Sep 4, 2025	Monica Harry
CSRM representative	5 Sept 2025	Liara Tutina

Elaine Wooler, 2025-01-09