



Process for Promoting Jurisdictional Value Set to Pan-Canadian Status on Canada Health Infoway's Terminology Server

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Background

As part of the implementation planning for the new FHIR terminology server, Infoway conducted a review of the storage, distribution, and maintenance processes of all hosted terminology artifacts. An assessment was done on the jurisdictional value sets published on the Terminology Gateway under "[Additional Terminology Content](#)". For these value sets, Infoway does not have the oversight for standards selection, development, and maintenance over time. These were evaluated in the context of best practice methodology for scope and maintenance of terminology products for inclusion in a national terminology service. As such, after consultation with the jurisdictional stewards of these value sets, it was determined that Infoway's national service should only store, maintain and distribute terminology products of national scope and relevance with terminology content that is wholly maintained by the Canadian Standards Release Centre (CSRC). This decision was taken to ensure the terminology products offered by the CSRC is always aligned to the latest standards and fit for purpose as terminology needs evolve.

Decision

Any jurisdictional value sets currently listed under "Additional Content" will need to be hosted locally for implementation needs such as in a local instance of a terminology server.

As part of this process, we are allowing for jurisdictional value sets that might be deemed to have been adopted for use beyond a single jurisdiction or implementation, to have a pathway to promotion whereby value sets can become a part of the national terminology service product offerings. These candidates would need to meet the criteria for such a promotion.

Pan-Canadian guidelines specify how value sets should be created, curated, and maintained to ensure their accuracy and relevance across jurisdictions. They must include concepts that are applicable to at least two or more provinces or territories and align with nationally or federally mandated initiatives, such as the [Pan-Canadian Health Data Content Framework](#) or the [Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap](#).



Process for Transitioning a Jurisdictional Value set to a Pan-Canadian

Request for Promotion (Jurisdictions)

Jurisdictions or value set owners must submit a formal request to Infoway for Pan-Canadian designation approval in InfoRMS.

Submission Process

The following should be provided to support the InfoRMS [submission using the existing Subset \(Value Set\) RFC process](#).

- i. Description and intended use of the value set
- ii. Rationale or justification for national relevance
- iii. Current adoption/implementation details where applicable
 - o Describe where and how the value set is actively used within provincial and other territorial healthcare systems. For example, list the jurisdictions that have adopted the value set in specific clinical or administrative contexts, such as emergency care coding, provider credentialing, or public health reporting.
 - o Identify the types of healthcare systems that use the value set, including any regional EHR systems, clinical registries, or health information exchanges. Mention specific vendors, if applicable, to illustrate the value set's interoperability potential across different technological environments.
 - o Note any differences in how the value set is implemented or interpreted across jurisdictions. For example, if certain provinces add unique codes or use different subsets within the value set, these distinctions should be outlined to aid in standardization discussions.
 - o Provide any quantitative data demonstrating the value set's current use and impact, such as usage frequency, the number of records coded, clinical encounters, or decision-making processes influenced by the value set. Also, stakeholder feedback or any evidence of benefits realization can strengthen the case for national adoption.
- IV. Supporting documentation
 1. Clearly define the purpose, scope, and desired outcomes of the initiative or implementation, ensuring alignment with national priorities or jurisdictional needs. Submit documents that support this alignment.
 2. Provide supporting documentation that outlines the objectives, such as an initial concept paper or proposal developed with stakeholder input.



3. Highlight any consultations conducted or working groups established for consensus-building. Collaborate with national and jurisdictional stakeholders to gather input and secure formal endorsement.
4. Ensure the initiative aligns with the Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap or the Pan-Canadian Health Data Content Framework, demonstrating its consistency with national interoperability goals.

Assessment for Promotion (CSRC)

Once a request has been received the CSRC will assess for acceptance against defined standards and criteria.

Criteria for attaining Pan-Canadian Status:

To qualify for Pan-Canadian designation, value sets must meet specific criteria established by Canada Health Infoway's Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap or Pan – Canadian Health Data Content Framework, which includes.

- a. National applicability or relevance across multiple jurisdictions. The value set must have clear applicability across multiple provinces and territories, fulfilling needs that are widely recognized and supported within the broader Canadian health system.
- b. Conformance to standardized processes and guidelines. The value set should adhere to recognized national standards, ensuring consistency in format, coding, and use that aligns with Pan-Canadian guidelines.
- c. Value sets must adhere to HL7 standards and be defined in alignment with FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources) or HL7 V2 2.5.1 specifications, as required by the implementation. All approved ValueSet and CodeSystem resources will be assigned an Infoway Canonical URL in FHIR and made available on the Terminology Server.

Non-Eligible Value sets:

Value sets will be deemed ineligible for promotion to Pan-Canadian status due to any or all the following:

- Has a scope that is limited to a single jurisdiction.
- Does not leverage recognized terminology or vocabulary standards.
- Does not support the goals of the Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap or Pan-Canadian Health Data Content Framework.

Assessment of current Value set

Identify the scope and usage of the existing jurisdictional value set to determine if it is in scope for Pan-Canadian promotion.



1. Evaluate the alignment of the current value set with existing Pan-Canadian standards or guidelines.
2. Conduct a standards selection evaluation to assess if the value set is leveraging appropriate standards and if not to assess if the value set is a candidate for adoption of a nationally approved standard based.
3. Collaborate with the requestor on the evaluation of request for promotion to gather input, address concerns, and ensure consensus is sought where required on the transition process. (e.g., GSSO standard)
4. Full review will include an evaluation of the existing documentation for the jurisdictional value set, such as definitions, codes, and usage guidelines. Any gaps or inconsistencies between the jurisdictional value set and Pan-Canadian standards will be identified and documented.
5. Jurisdictions will be notified of the outcome of their submission through the InfoRMS Request system, along with detailed instructions for next steps. If a submission is not approved for promotion to Pan-Canadian status, jurisdictions will have the opportunity to appeal the decision by providing additional supporting evidence or addressing the identified gaps. Appeals will be reviewed to ensure fairness and transparency.

Maintenance

The ongoing maintenance of Pan-Canadian value sets is a critical component of ensuring their quality, relevance, and effectiveness in supporting national interoperability. Managed by the CSRC, this process involves regular updates against standards release cycles. The process is responsive to change requests from implementers to ensure terminologies continue to evolve and remain fit for purpose.

Value Proposition

1. Aligning value sets with established CSRC standards development and maintenance practices ensure we offer current, fit for purpose terminology products for the benefit of application in all healthcare systems across Canada to enable semantic interoperability.
2. The request for change process for content development and feedback mechanism ensures continuous improvement and responsiveness to changing adoption needs from implementers.