

3. Newsletter

ICF Core Sets

April - June 2004

Dear partners and friends of the ICF Core Set project,

The ICF Core Sets project is growing day by day. In the ICF Core Sets Validation Study, there are 85 study centers from 34 different countries participating in the project, in addition to the 48 centers within Germany (see section 1.1 in this newsletter).

Your participation in this project will ultimately lead to a definition of standards for the application of the ICF in clinical practice and research. The ultimate goal is to promote health, to restore and maintain functioning, and to prevent disability in people with a health condition by applying the ICF and the ICF Core Sets to ensure better description, recognition, and understanding of functioning both for individuals and in populations.

In this issue we would like to inform you on the actual status of the project, including a brief summary on further ICF Core Sets studies which are taking place parallel to the “ICF Core Sets Multicenter International Validation Study”.

Your ICF Core Set Development Team

1. Project Status

1.1. Number of study centers per country

No.	Country	Study Centers
1.	Australia	3
2.	Austria	3
3.	Brazil	1
4.	Canada	1
5.	China	4
6.	Cyprus	1
7.	Finland	1
8.	France	1
9.	Germany	48
10.	Greece	4
11.	Hungary	15
12.	Italy	3
13.	Kuwait	2
14.	Lebanon	1
15.	Lithuania	1
16.	Malaysia	1
17.	Mexico	1
18.	Nigeria	1
19.	Norway	3
20.	Philippines	1
21.	Poland	1
22.	Portugal	4
23.	Romania	3
24.	Russia	1
25.	Serbia	2
26.	South Africa	1
27.	South Korea	1
28.	Spain	1
29.	Sweden	2
30.	Switzerland	8
31.	Netherlands	3
32.	Tunisie	1
33.	Turkey	5
34.	UK	2
35.	USA	2
	Total	133 Centers

1.2. Training of Health Professionals

Training of international study centers

The training video and all required material for the execution of the ICF Core Sets Validation Study have been sent to all our international study centers on the first week of June 2004. Thus, from now on the data collection of the study can be initiated.

If you have any questions during the data collection, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Training of German study centers

Since the beginning of the year, there have been 4 training workshops for the data collection of the ICF Core Sets Validation Study. 78 health professionals from 41 different study centers have attended the training workshops. These events will take place regularly with intervals of 4 to 6 weeks.

The next training workshop takes place on July 23rd, 2004 at the Ludwig Maximilian University Munich from 10:00 to 16:30. The registration form is attached to this newsletter.

1.3. Data Collection

In Germany, all material for the execution of the ICF Core Sets Validation Study has been sent since the beginning of 2004. Currently, 28 from the 48 German study centers have started the data collection and the first 33 questionnaires of the conditions low back pain, chronic widespread pain and stroke have been sent back to the ICF Research Branch Munich for the data entry.

2. Endorsement of the ICF Core Sets Validation Study by the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR)

The EULAR Executive Committee has bestowed a research grant to the ICF Research Branch of the WHO Collaborating Center for the European validation study of the ICF Core Sets for five musculoskeletal diseases: rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, low back pain and chronic widespread pain.

We are convinced that the endorsement of EULAR for this project will enable you to successfully submit local grants. The ICF Research Branch at the University of Munich would be pleased to support any applications to national and local organisations.

3. Report on further ICF Core Sets studies

3.1. *Validating the Comprehensive ICF Core Set for Rheumatoid Arthritis from the Patient Perspective*

Tanja Stamm (Vienna, Austria), Michaela Coenen (Munich, Germany)

The Comprehensive ICF Core Set for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an application of the ICF which represents the typical spectrum of problems in functioning of patients with RA. The Comprehensive ICF Core Sets for RA will not only be validated based on the patients' data collected within the scope of the ICF Core Sets Validation Study but also from the perspective of those who experience the disease. The objective of this qualitative study performed in cooperation between the ICF Research Branch at the University of Munich and the Vienna Medical University is to validate the Comprehensive ICF Core Set for RA from the patient perspective.

Individual interviews with 21 patients with RA were performed in Vienna (Austria) and focus groups with 5 to 6 patients each were performed in Munich (Germany). Transcribed data were analyzed according to the qualitative method of 'meaning condensation' which allows to identify 'meaning units' in the interview texts. Each 'meaning unit' was then linked to the most specific ICF category according to established linking rules. Currently preliminary findings of the both methods (individual interviews and focus groups) are being discussed. Next, the results of the two methods will be compared. The Comprehensive ICF Core Set for RA will finally be compared to the ICF categories which emerged from the individual interviews and focus groups.

3.2. *Health Professional perspective*

Dr. Inge Kirchberger (Munich, Germany)

Besides the ICF Core Sets Multicenter International Validation Study and the Validation from the patient perspective, a third approach to validate the ICF Core Sets for RA is being performed, namely it is a validation from the perspective of health professionals involved in the health care of patients suffering from this disease. The main question is whether the interventions applied to patients with RA by different health professions and the intervention-related effects on the patients' functioning and well-being are represented in the ICF categories selected for the ICF Core Sets for RA. This approach is being pursued with an international survey from experts (physicians, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, psychologists and social workers) according to the Delphi method.

The survey with physical therapists and occupational therapists has already been initiated. In the first round of the electronic-mail survey, 82 physical therapists from 12 Countries as well as 41 occupational therapists from 9 Countries informed about the interventions applied to patients with RA. Surveys with other health professional groups will start within this year.

3.3. *Intervention categories for physical therapy*

Erika Omega Huber, Monika Finger, Jürg Stoll (Switzerland)

The first version of intervention categories for physical therapy has been developed by a Swiss working group headed by Erika Omega Huber.

Since musculoskeletal, neurological, and internal areas in the acute phase, during rehabilitation and follow-up can be distinguished, nine different groups of intervention categories for physical therapy have been developed:

- Musculoskeletal/Acute
- Musculoskeletal/Rehabilitation
- Musculoskeletal/follow-up

- Neurological/Acute
- Neurological/Rehabilitation
- Neurological/ follow-up

- Internal/Acute
- Internal/Rehabilitation
- Internal/ follow-up

The ultimate aim of this project is to create a meaningful basis for the indication of physical therapy.

The first version of these nine different groups of intervention categories for the physical therapy was developed during nine different Delphi-exercises. A decision-making process followed at a conference that took place during the Swiss Physical Therapy Congress in 2004. Physiotherapists from the German-, French-, and Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland participated in the Delphi exercise and the conference.

The first version of the intervention categories for the physical therapy will be validated within the scope of a multicenter validation study and based on data collected from patients during the next two years.

4. Publications

The supplement of the Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine with the title "ICF CORE SETS FOR CHRONIC CONDITIONS" will be released to the public on the last week of July 2004, as soon as this occurs, we will inform you by e-mail. This supplement contains all relevant information on the ICF Core Sets development project.

5. Study Centers

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6. Attachments

Workshop Registration Form