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EPIDEMIOLOGY

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR RECORDING SURFACE LOCATION: THE ICD-11 SURFACE TOPOGRAPHY CLASSIFICATION

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Introduction: There is currently no internationally agreed schema for documenting surface location on the human body.

Objective: To create a comprehensive international standard for recording body surface location for the recently released 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

Methods: Using the British Association of Dermatologists' classification of body sites as its starting point, an International Surface Anatomy Working Group with representation from three continents convened in 2014 to create a new comprehensive hierarchically ordered surface topography classification. Following wider consultation and refinement, it was submitted to the World Health Organization (WHO) for incorporation into the Extensions chapter of ICD-11. A subsequent careful review in 2018 resulted in further minor modification. The terms were also cross-referenced to other anatomy classification systems including SNOMED CT and ICD-O-topography.

Results: The resulting classification contains some 600 terms ranging from broad body regions (e.g. head and neck, anogenital region) to highly specific locations (e.g. medial canthus, proximal nail fold of index finger), each of which can be further refined for laterality. The set can be readily filtered to less than 200 terms for more general use but the full set is available for precise documentation, particularly of the location of malignant neoplasms.

Conclusions: Combined with the detailed classification of malignant skin neoplasms contained in ICD-11, the new topography codes will enable much more precise coding of skin cancer such that "nodular basal cell carcinoma of the left medial canthus" can be captured using just a couple of mouse clicks to add laterality and site. With an appropriate graphical interface a single mouse click should enable the location of a given lesion to be











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documented with a graphical record, a standard text descriptor and a unique site-specific ICD code string. Importantly, the codes are also appropriate for documenting the location of dermatoses.



24TH WORLD CONGRESS OF DERMATOLOGY MILAN 2019



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