

# NCIS Coding Tips

## May 2005

### NCIS Coder Training

Thank you to all the coders who participated in the NCIS Coder Training session over the last few months.



Training sessions have now been held for all states:

Nov 25 – 27: QLD Coders - Brisbane  
Dec 13 – 14: NSW Coders – Sydney  
Dec 16 – 17: NSW Coders – Sydney  
Feb 13 – 14: WA & NT Coders – Melbourne  
Mar 16 – 17: TAS Coders – Hobart  
Mar 21 – 22: TAS Coders – Launceston  
Apr 04 – 05: SA Coders – Adelaide  
May 09: VIC Coders - Melbourne

Further sessions may be held for states with reasonable justification (high staff turnover).

Anyone requiring further copies of the NCIS Coder User Manual should contact Leanne Daking as soon as possible via either:

- 03 9684 4458 OR
- [leanned@vifm.org](mailto:leanned@vifm.org)

### Product Related Review

A recently completed project investigating the merits, weaknesses and potential of the Product Related data field will be used to commence the amendment to the concept, definition and data field.

As a result of this project NCIS will investigate the feasibility of introducing an additional data field that will be used to identify the involvement of the product in the incident and death.

Further development is required and while NCIS will minimise the impact on coders, the amendments are needed to ensure that our data is meaningful. Implementation of any changes should be finalised before the end of the year.



### Upgrades of the LCMS

Upgrades were recently completed on the six MUNCCI Local Case Management Systems used throughout Australia. Many of these upgrades will be incorporated into the NCIS interface, ensuring uniformity of data entry requirements for all states as well as consistency of data entered. Some of the major upgrades are described below.



#### • Closed When Date

Changes to this data field have been two fold

1. Data field renamed as **Coroner Closed**

All states, excluding VIC and NSW are asked to commence using this field to enter the date the case was closed by the coroner.

Victoria and New South Wales will be advised when the changes to NCIS have been implemented and modifications to data entry practice commence.

Amendments to this field will:

- Ensure that all states are using the field for the same concept and data;
  - Allow states to determine the duration between notification and closure of cases by coroners.
2. Inclusion of an automated and hidden Date Case Closed field.

An automated field has been added to the LCMS to date stamp each case upon closure. The field is hidden from coders.

The inclusion of this field will:

- Give the NCIS quality team a reliable indication of the date a case was closed for inclusion in QA processes.
- Allow states to determine the duration between notification and closure in the LCMS or NCIS.

- **Date Death Between (Case Details)**

The Date of Death data field on the Case Details screen now enables the entry of a date range.

- If the exact date of death is known, only the 'D.O.D on' field should be completed.
- If exact date of death is not known enter both the 'D.O.D on' and the 'or between' field to indicate the Date of Death period.

*Note: This date is then carried over to the Time Location – Death field. You will need to enter the relevant times in the Time Location screen.*

- **Medical Certificate Flag**

The medical certificate data field should be flagged for any case for which a medical certificate has been issued.

Although these cases will remain in the LCMS they will not be transferred across to NCIS during the upload process.

- **Search facility for File Location**

The File Location data field has been added to allow users to search for cases based on the physical location of a case file.

Results will display those records where the file is marked to that particular location.

- **Case Transferred flag**

This data field has been included to allow for the identification of duplicate records resulting from case transfer between courts and jurisdictions.

- Transferred In – indicates that the case was originally investigated or opened by another court or jurisdiction and transferred to your court for completion. The original location and case file numbers should also be completed.
- Transferred Out - indicates that the case has been assigned to another court or jurisdiction for completion. The original location and case file numbers should also be completed.

NCIS will use this data field to identify duplicate files and remove unnecessary cases from the NCIS.

- **Deletion of Mechanism of Injury Coding**

A new 'delete' function has been added to the Death Mechanism screen.

This enables the deletion of the full mechanism and object details record. This function will help to ensure that cases are accurately coded and allow the removal of instances of unnecessary coding or overcoding.

Coding must be deleted in a hierarchical order. In order to delete the primary mechanism you must first ensure that all secondary mechanisms have been deleted.

**Note:** Mechanism details can be edited. If you only need to change some of the details on a mechanism then you can just make the amendments – there is no need to delete the full mechanism. Also, the object details can be deleted just by selecting the 'No Object' tick box.

- **Renaming of Mechanism of Injury code ' J2.8 Drowning/Near-Drowning: Other'**

The definition of code J2.8 has been renamed as:

'Other specified drowning/near-drowning'

This will be followed by a field text field, allowing further specification of the drowning incident.

This amendment was implemented to ensure consistency of the data dictionary and code definitions.

## Pathological Terminology review

A few definitions and terms that may make coding a bit easier

Adhesion	The joining of two normally separate surfaces (tissue, muscle, joints) following inflammation or damage
Aneurysm	A sac or balloon like swelling formed by the dilatation of the wall of a blood vessel or the heart
Aorta	Main artery in the body, from which all others arise
Ascitic fluid	Fluid in the abdominal cavity
Asphyxia	Mechanical obstruction of respiration, suffocation, inability of oxygen to reach any part of the respiratory system
Atheroma	Narrowing of artery by a collection of fat-like material, resulting in limited circulation
Autolysis	Decomposition/breakdown of organs by body enzymes (after death)
Bruise	Escape of blood from a blood vessel into the adjacent tissue
Cardiomegaly	Enlargement of the heart
Cardiomyopathy	Chronic disease of the heart muscle, cause often unknown
Cerebral arteries	Blood vessels to the brain
Cirrhosis	Disease of the liver often associated with alcoholics
Contusion	See. Bruise
Coronary arteries	Arteries supplying blood to the heart
Effusion	The escape of fluid (pus, serum, blood, lymph) into a body cavity
Embolism	Blocking of a blood vessel by a mass which has broken off from the main clot (blood, fat, air or foreign body)
Hyoid-larynx	Adams apple
Hypertrophy	Increase in size of an organ or tissue caused by enlargement rather than the multiplication of cells
Hypostatic lividity	Discolouration of the skin due to pooling of the blood after death
Infarction	The death of (part or all) a tissue or organ due to lack of blood or oxygen
Ischaemia	Inadequate flow of blood to a part of the body
Laceration	Tear or spilt caused by blunt force impact resulting in the pulling apart of tissue rather than an cutting or incising
Oedema	Swelling produced by the accumulation of fluid collecting under the skin
Petechial haemorrhage	Spot-like haemorrhages caused by leaking of blood from tiny vessels
Pneumothorax	Air in the pleural space which cause the collapse of the lungs
Stenosis	Abnormal narrowing of a vessel, duct or intestines
Thromboembolism	Blocking of blood vessel by blot clot
Thrombus	Blood clot
Unremarkable	Normal, no diseases seen
Secondary to	Two or more independent conditions that are inter-related in the deceased, one being exacerbated by and 'coming after' the other
Due to	A condition that could not have occurred without the other condition having existed first in the deceased. One is the direct result of the other