National Cancer Institute (NCI) NCPDP Terminology Subset Process

NCPDP has adopted terminology sets from the NCI Thesaurus (NCIt), aligning with the FDA Structured Product Labeling (SPL) and the Federal Medications Terminologies (FMT) standards. As part of NCI's Enterprise Vocabulary Services (EVS), NCPDP worked with NCI terminologists to create subset files specific to NCPDP standards usage based on concept(s)/term(s) originated and supplied by NCPDP.

The NCPDP Terminology page of the NCI site is located at https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/cbiit/vocabulary/ncpdp.

The NCPDP Terminology files may be downloaded from https://evs.nci.nih.gov/ftp1/NCPDP/About.html.

For more details about this and other subsets owned by entities other than NCPDP, refer to the web-enabled External Code List© -> Additional Information -> NCPDP Use of External Code Lists and Vocabularies.

This document outlines the process for adding or removing concept(s)/term(s) from existing NCPDP NCIt subsets, creating new NCPDP NCIt subsets and removing NCPDP NCIt subsets.

Add or Remove Concept(s)/Term(s) to an Existing NCPDP NCIt Subset

1. A request to add or remove concept(s)/term(s) is presented to the task group(s) who own the standard(s) using the data elements where the code source of values is an NCPDP subset. The request must be accompanied by a use case documenting the business need to add or remove the concept(s)/term(s).
    a. If no such task group exists, the request is submitted to the Maintenance and Control (MC) Work Group liaison for inclusion as New Business topic for the MC agenda at the next Work Group meeting.
        i. At the Work Group meeting, the request will be assigned to an existing task group or to a newly formed task group for review and consideration.
2. The task group and staff liaison will research and consider the concept(s)/term(s).
    a. For adding concept(s)/term(s)
        i. Confirm there is not an existing NCIt code in the relevant subset that could be used.
        ii. Research existing industry resources such as manufacturer documentation, industry publications, and/or subject matter experts (e.g., manufacturer, DailyMed) to determine the most applicable description/term/business case.
        iii. The task group(s) must consider if the requested concept(s)/term(s) makes sense within the context of the data element(s) using the subset.
        iv. The liaison will contact the NCI EVS representative, provide the concept(s)/term(s) and the applicable terminology subset description from the *NCPDP Use of External Code Lists© and Vocabularies,* and ask whether there is an existing NCIt code(s) available for the concept(s)/term(s).
            1. EVS SMEs review the concept(s)/term(s) and suggest mapping to existing NCIt concepts and/or the creation of new concepts, if needed.
            2. EVS recommends the best concepts and definitions from their analysis for NCPDP's agreement and final determination.
    b. For removing concept(s)/term(s)

        i. Confirm the removal will not cause a negative impact across affected standards.
        ii. If a standard is impacted, determine if any mapping needs to be provided to indicate alternative NCIt code(s) to use in place of the sunset/removed code(s).
            1. The staff liaison will contact the NCI EVS for assistance in identifying the appropriate alternative code(s).
3. Once the task group(s) reaches consensus on the additions or removals of concept(s)/term(s), an effective date and a compliance date need to be identified
    a. Effective Date: The monthly NCI EVS publication date of the subset file (e.g., April 2026)
    b. Compliance/Implementation Date: The date implementers should use the updated subset.
4. An ECL DERF (DERF) outlining the request is submitted.
5. The effective date and compliance/implementation date of the change and any implications to a specific version of a standard are included in the DERF for approval. The DERF is reviewed in the appropriate work group for approval. If more than one task group is impacted and the task groups are in multiple work groups, the DERF will be assigned to WG19 NCPDP Standards Coordination with a final review by MC Maintenance & Control.
6. Following work group approval of the DERF, the liaison for the applicable task group submits a request to NCI EVS with the following information, indication of the action (add or remove) for the NCIt Code(s) and the requested effective date.
    a. Name of subset (aka NCPDP Subset Preferred Term)
    b. NCIt Code (supplied by NCI EVS)
    c. NCPDP Preferred Term
    d. NCPDP Synonym (if applicable)
    e. NCIt Preferred Term (supplied by NCI EVS)
    f. NCI Definition (supplied by NCI EVS)
7. If a mapping is to be provided for a removed concept(s)/term(s), an appropriate NCPDP document (e.g., Telecom FAQ Editorial, Task Group FAQ, SIR document) will be created or updated to include any necessary mapping and be published.
8. The task group liaison requests the publication of an article in the *NCPDP Now* to announce the updated subset is published and a reminder of the compliance/implementation date.
    a. If a mapping is published, the article must include a link to the documentation.

Add a New NCPDP Subset to the Terminology Files

A new subset may be created by:

- Selecting NCIt code values from an existing NCPDP subset to create a new smaller or similar subset.
- Identifying concept(s)/term(s) for NCI EVS to map to existing NCIt codes or create new codes for a new subset.

1. A request to create a new NCPDP subset of values is presented to the task group(s) who own the standard(s) using the data elements where the code source of values will be the new NCPDP subset. The request must be accompanied by a use case documenting the business need for a new NCPDP subset of NCIt codes to be the code source for values for the data element.
    a. If no such task group exists, the request is submitted to the Maintenance and Control (MC) Work Group liaison for inclusion as New Business topic for the MC agenda at the next Work Group meeting.
        i. At the Work Group meeting, the request will be assigned to an existing task group or to a newly formed task group for review and consideration.

2. The task group and staff liaison will research and consider the concept(s)/term(s) to include on the new subset.
    a. Confirm an existing NCPDP subset cannot be used.
    b. Identify NCIt code values
        i. When selecting from an existing subset,
            1. Establish criteria for selecting which concept(s)/term(s) will be appropriate for the new subset.
            2. Select the appropriate concept(s)/term(s) based on the criteria.
            3. Confirm the selected concept(s)/term(s) make sense within the context of the data element(s) using the subset.
        ii. When creating a new subset,
            1. Research existing industry resources such as manufacturer documentation, industry publications, and/or subject matter experts (e.g., manufacturer, DailyMed) to determine the most applicable description/term/business case. Consider if the requested concept(s)/term(s) makes sense within the context of the data element(s) using the subset.
            2. The liaison will contact the NCI EVS representative, provide the concept(s)/term(s) and ask whether there is an existing NCIt code(s) available for the concept(s)/term(s).
                a. EVS SMEs review the concept(s)/term(s) and suggest mapping to existing NCIt concepts and/or the creation of new concepts, if needed.
                b. EVS recommends the best concepts and definitions from their analysis for NCPDP's agreement and final determination.
            3. Finalize the list of values based upon the recommendations of EVS.
3. If the values for an existing data element are being changed from NCPDP-defined ECL values, an external code source, or a different NCPDP NCIt subset, the task group determines if any mapping needs to be provided from the old values to the new values.
4. Once the task group(s) reaches consensus on the creation of a new subset, an effective date and a compliance date need to be identified
    a. Effective Date: The monthly NCI EVS publication date of the subset file (e.g., April 2026)
    b. Compliance/Implementation Date: The date implementers should use the updated subset.
5. A DERF outlining the creation of a new subset is submitted.
    a. The list of values, the proposed subset name, the effective date, the compliance/implementation date of the change and any implications to a specific version of a standard are included in the DERF for approval.
6. The DERF is reviewed in the appropriate work group for approval. If more than one task group is impacted and the task groups are in multiple work groups, the DERF will be assigned to WG19 NCPDP Standards Coordination with a final review by MC Maintenance & Control.
7. Following work group approval of the DERF, the liaison for the task group submits a request to NCI EVS to create a new subset with the following information and the requested effective date.
    a. Propose name of subset (aka NCPDP Subset Preferred Term)
    b. NCIt Code (supplied by NCI EVS)
    c. NCPDP Preferred Term
    d. NCPDP Synonym (if applicable)
    e. NCIt Preferred Term (supplied by NCI EVS)
    f. NCI Definition (supplied by NCI EVS)

9. If a mapping from old values to new values is to be provided, an appropriate NCPDP document (e.g., Telecom FAQ Editorial, Task Group FAQ, SIR document) will be created or updated to include any necessary mapping and be published.
8. The task group liaison requests the publication of an article in the *NCPDP Now* to announce the availability of the new subset and a reminder of the compliance/implementation date.
    a. If a mapping is published, the article must include a link to the documentation.
9. The DD/ECL Editor updates the *NCPDP Use of External Code Lists and Vocabularies* to add the new subset.

Remove an Existing NCPDP Subset from the Terminology Files

A subset may need to be removed from the NCIt site because there are no active data elements using the subset.

When an NCPDP data element utilizing the subset is sunset or begins using a different set of values, there may be a need for the NCPDP subset on the NCIt website to be accessed and referenced if the data element is active in the version of a standard implemented in the industry. Removal of the subset from the NCIt Terminology Files should be delayed until a subsequent version of the standard without the data element has been implemented.

1. NCPDP staff submits a request to NCI EVS to remove a subset from the Terminology Files and the requested effective date.
2. The DD/ECL Editor updates the *NCPDP Use of External Code Lists and Vocabularies* to remove the subset.

Assumption: A DERF has been approved which includes removing the NCPDP subset from the Terminology Files.