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**Traditional Chinese medicine —  
Categories of clinical terminological  
system to support the integration of  
clinical terms from traditional Chinese  
medicine and Western medicine**





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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 249, *Traditional Chinese medicine*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

The clinical terms used in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) are distinct from those used in healthcare systems based on Western medicine. Although the SNOMED CT<sup>[29]</sup> has become more mature and the TCM clinical term framework has already been published, the clinical terms of TCM and Western medicine are used in combination in real medical records, and therefore cannot and should not be completely separated. Specific standards are urgently needed to support the increase of computer applications and electronic communication in healthcare. An encompassing terminological system is required to support a consistent way of indexing, reserving, retrieving and aggregating TCM and Western medicine clinical data. The standardization of TCM clinical terminology (ISO 19465) cannot fully meet the needs of electronic medical record processing for hospitals. The large number of clinical terms cannot be effectively managed without classification. Development of a categorial framework is a fundamental requirement for the development of the terminological system.

The objective of this document is to express a core categorial structure of clinical terms of TCM and Western medicine, based upon existing structures. The development of this document will help existing users to develop a robust logical clinical terminology system.



# Traditional Chinese medicine — Categories of clinical terminological system to support the integration of clinical terms from traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine

## 1 Scope

This document establishes the core classification framework for the integration of clinical terms from traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Western medicine. This structure supports terminology integration in standardized electronic medical records, including professional clinical terms in TCM and Western medicine. Non-technical terms for electronic medical records are also included.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1 concept

internal conception, general notion or idea of something

Note 1 to entry: Concepts are not necessarily bound to particular languages. They are, however, influenced by the social or cultural background often leading to different categorizations.

[SOURCE: ISO/TS 18876-1:2003, 3.1.3, modified — "internal conception" added, Note 1 to entry added.]

### 3.2 concept system

set of *concepts* (3.1) structured according to the relations among them

[SOURCE: ISO 1087-1:2000, 3.2.11]

### 3.3 terminology

structured human and machine-readable representation of clinical *concepts* (3.1) required directly or indirectly to describe health conditions and healthcare activities, and allow their subsequent retrieval or analysis

EXAMPLE This includes the relationship of the terminology to the specifications for organizing, communicating and interpreting such a set of concepts. The use of the term terminology in healthcare implies a terminology that is designed for use in computer systems. The term vocabulary or health or medical language is used to indicate the broader idea of linguistic representation without the specification of computability.

[SOURCE: ISO 18104:2014, 3.1.9, modified — example added, Note 1 to entry removed.]