

## **International Pathology Organization Endorses SNOMED® As Preferred Reference Language for Laboratory Clinicians**

(Northfield, IL) -- The World Association of Societies of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine (WASPaLM) recently endorsed SNOMED – the Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine – as the preferred clinical terminology for coding in pathology laboratories worldwide.

SNOMED, developed and maintained by the College of American Pathologists (CAP), is a scientifically validated reference terminology that enables clinicians, researchers and patients to share common concepts worldwide, across clinical specialties and sites of care. Used in over 40 countries, it is recognized by health care enterprises, practitioners, software vendors and administrators, as the most comprehensive terminology available to facilitate the storage, retrieval and aggregation of health care data.

"The CAP, committed to quality patient care worldwide, is a leader in the development and maintenance of clinical vocabularies. WASPaLM recognizes the role SNOMED terminology plays in supporting international excellence in pathology and laboratory medicine," said Henry Travers, MD, FCAP, Director-at-Large of WASPaLM and CAP governor. "This endorsement encourages pathologists to share health data in an effort to improve the health of the global population."

Founded in 1947 in Paris, the WASPaLM includes 59 member societies throughout the world. Through its Council on World Standards and categorical secretariats in quality assurance, informatics, socio-economic affairs, countries in need, medical ethics, environmental and occupational disease and forensic pathology, WASPaLM facilitates communication, standard setting, international pathologist certification and the creation of global opportunities for cooperation in commerce, education, research and practice. WASPaLM is located on the World Wide Web at <http://www.waspalm.org>

"WASPaLM's endorsement furthers SNOMED's commitment to serving the terminology needs of the pathology profession, as well as the rest of the medical community," said John C. Neff, MD, FCAP, Chair of the SNOMED® International Authority. "It is another step to help ensure that healthcare knowledge is

accessible and usable whenever and wherever it is needed.”

SNOMED® RT, the newest edition of SNOMED, is a multi-dimensional clinical reference terminology covering diseases, clinical findings, etiologies, therapies, and procedures. Its unprecedented breadth and scope facilitates the exchange of coded specimens and diagnostic results across both similar and disparate laboratory information systems and geographic boundaries. This enables the linkage of laboratory data to the rest of the electronic patient health record.

SNOMED® CT, the next generation of SNOMED works, further delivers the promise of a common international clinical terminology. Scheduled for release at the end of 2001, SNOMED CT is being developed in conjunction with the UK's National Health Service Information Authority and combines the strengths of SNOMED RT in specialty medicine and the richness of the NHS' Clinical Terms Version 3 in primary medicine.

Today, SNOMED is used extensively by pathologists to code and index surgical pathologic diagnoses, to report the incidence and severity of cancer cases to central registries and to track the incidence of infectious diseases for reporting to public health agencies. Other uses include encoding autopsy, forensic and blood bank findings in an electronic format, indexing digital microscopic and macroscopic images for storage within a data repository, as well as retrieving cases for outcomes analysis and managed care contract proposals.

The CAP is a not-for-profit medical society consisting of nearly 16,000 physician members and the laboratory community throughout the world. It is the world's largest association composed exclusively of pathologists and is widely considered the leader in laboratory quality assurance. The CAP is an advocate for high quality and cost-effective patient care. The College is located on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cap.org>.

SNOMED® International, a division of the CAP, is committed to the excellence of patient care through the development of scientifically validated reference terminology – SNOMED RT – that enables clinicians, researchers and patients to share common concepts worldwide, across clinical specialties and sites of care. SNOMED is located on the World Wide Web at <http://www.snomed.org>.