



ICPC-2: International Classification of Primary Care (Oxford Medical Publications)

By World Organization of Family Doctors

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Until the mid 1970s, most morbidity data collected in primary care research was classified using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). This had the advantage of international recognition, aiding comparability of data from different countries. However, many symptoms and non-diseases conditions that present in primary care were difficult to code with this classification, originally designed for application to mortality statistics and with a disease-based structure. Recognizing the problem, WONCA designed the International Classification of Health Problems in Primary Care (ICHPPC) - however, this was still seen as too closely related to the ICD. A new classification was needed that encompassed both the patient's reason for encounter and the patient's problem. It was also recognized that the building of appropriate primary care systems to allow the assessment and implementation of health care priorities is only possible if the right information is available to health care planners - and this has led to the development of a new classification system - namely, International Classification of Primary Care (ICPC). ICPC includes reasons for encounter classifications and thus is a patient-oriented rather than disease- or provider-oriented approach. Since the first edition of the *International Classification of Primary Care* was published, there have been extensive trials, particularly in Europe, and this second edition includes the lessons learnt from this testing, a detailed conversion system for linking the ICPC and ICD-10 codes published by the WHO, additional inclusion criteria, and cross-referencing to rubrics. This new edition has been carefully mapped to the ICD-10 codes and this has led to recognition that the two classifications are complementary rather than competing. Both WONCA and WHO are to jointly sponsor this new edition.

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