

Australian Medicines Terminology

nehta

National E-Health Transition Authority

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A standards based national approach to the identification and naming of medicines in clinical systems for Australia

As part of the evolution of e-health it is essential that Australian clinical systems utilise an accessible standard terminology to uniquely identify and describe the medicines available in Australia for computers, clinicians and patients.

The Australian Medicines Terminology (AMT) uniquely and unambiguously codes and describes all commonly used medicines and can be implemented in clinical information systems for the following activities:

- Prescribe
- Record
- Review
- Issue, including dispense
- Administer
- Transfer of information

Benefits of Using AMT

Reduces errors by improving the precise recording and transcribing of medicines through the use of clear, standard and unambiguous naming.

Enables the safe and reliable exchange of medicines information, ensuring continuity of care for patients across primary, secondary, private and public health settings, as well as across different healthcare providers.

Facilitates effective decision support through identification of active ingredients to assist with drug allergy and drug interaction checking.

Supports good clinical practice by allowing linkage of data such as clinical guidelines and dosing information.

Who should use AMT?

AMT has been primarily developed to be used in clinical software applications to facilitate interoperability between systems. It can also be utilised and consumed by knowledge resource developers, clinicians, researchers, statistical users, government agencies, healthcare organisations and consumers.

Information contained in AMT

AMT contains information that uniquely and accurately describes medicines using a set of defining properties.

For example, the active ingredient, the product trade name as well as a combination of the active ingredient, dosage form, strength and pack size (also see Fig. 1):

Active ingredient:	amoxicillin
Dosage form:	capsule
Strength:	500 mg
Pack size:	20 capsules
Trade name:	Amoxil

AMT is designed and developed using guidelines that have been subject to iterative external review and subsequent modification to reflect current clinical and safety advice.

AMT is based on products that have been registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in treating patients in Australia.

Figure 1: AMT High Level Model (v3 AMT model)



AMT Releases

AMT is released monthly to include new items from the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods as well as items listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

These updates are available from the NEHTA secure site. A browser application is also available to assist users in viewing the terminology and its relationships. As AMT is an extension to SNOMED CT¹, a SNOMED CT licence is required.

How to get a copy of AMT

Access to the AMT release files is available to licence holders. There is no fee for the license and it is available from the National Clinical Terminology and Information Service (NCTIS).

To learn more about the licensing arrangements or to register your request for a licence, please access the licensing section of the NEHTA Secure Website at:
<https://nehta.org.au/aht>



Further information

For more information on AMT and other NEHTA clinical terminology products and services please visit the NEHTA website at:
<http://www.nehta.gov.au>

AMT Scenario



A general practitioner new to Charters Towers, a rural town in north Queensland, wishes to prescribe an antibiotic for Mrs. Smith's bacterial throat infection.

He would like to prescribe amoxicillin 500 mg capsules to be taken one every 8 hours for 5 days (total of 15 capsules needed).

The doctor is not sure which brand of antibiotic is available in the local pharmacy. To overcome this, his clinical application using the AMT allows for prescribing via medicinal concepts. That is, the MPP concept allows for identification of available pack sizes without relation to a manufacturer or brand. (see Figure 1)

In his clinical application that incorporates AMT, the GP searches for amoxicillin, locates 'amoxicillin 500 mg capsule, 20' and chooses to prescribe. This then allows the pharmacist to supply whichever product they have available –

Alphamox 500 mg capsule, 20, blister pack (CTPP with the relationship to the chosen MPP).

The National Clinical Terminology Information Service (NCTIS)

The National Clinical Terminology and Information Service (NCTIS) within NEHTA is responsible for managing, developing and distributing AMT in Australia. This responsibility also extends to other clinical terminologies such as SNOMED CT and SNOMED CT-AU.

Contact

If you have any suggestions or feedback, please contact:
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¹ SNOMED CT[®] is a registered trademark of the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation.