

The Project Place

Basic Guidelines for Polymer Nomenclature

IUPAC has a long history of carefully tailoring rules to help polymer scientists name the polymers that they are using and synthesizing. While many scientists are aware of the importance of correctly applying nomenclature, it is apparent to journal managers and editors that polymer names are not always properly used in submitted articles. The case for exactly naming polymers is all the stronger in this day of computer-based searches.

This project's goal is to help close this gulf by widely distributing, through the portals of polymer-interested journals, a short (two-page), easily assimilated document that will describe basic rules that can be applied to most polymers. The guidelines will not detail all the available rules—far from it!—but they should help polymer scientists, especially those who have had little prior contact with polymer nomenclature, understand how some basic conventions can be applied to most common and novel polymers. Hyperlinks will be placed in the PDF file to allow authors to explore in greater detail the wealth of documents already made available by IUPAC.

Representatives from American Chemical Society, Elsevier, Wiley, and IUPAC will come together to build the document and to ensure its distribution. These basic guidelines to polymer nomenclature should be easily accessible to anyone who wants to write a paper on polymer science. It is also hoped that the guidelines will make life easier for those working behind the scenes in polymer publishing.

For more information and comments, contact Task Group Chair Roger Hiorns <hiorns@enscpb.fr>.

 www.iupac.org/web/ins/2008-032-1-400

Laboratory Test Terminology Trial-Run Begins

On 1 April 2009, the owners of three standards that contain laboratory test terminology—Logical Observation Identifiers, Names, Codes (LOINC); Nomenclature, Properties, and Units (NPU); and Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine—Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT)—began an operational trial of prospective divisions of labor in the generation of laboratory test terminology content. This trial will provide practical experience and important information on opportuni-

ties to decrease duplication of efforts in the development of laboratory test terminology and to ensure that SNOMED CT works effectively with LOINC or NPU.

During the trial:

- New laboratory test terminology content will be created by the Regenstrief Institute (RI) and the LOINC Committee, which owns LOINC, or by the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry (IFCC) and the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), which owns NPU, but not by the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization (IHTSDO), which owns SNOMED CT.
- SNOMED CT modeling of such content will be done as a by-product of creating new content for LOINC or NPU and then incorporated into SNOMED CT.
- SNOMED CT codes will be used to represent appropriate parts of LOINC and NPU entities.

Designed to last six months or less, the trial will also provide an opportunity to assess the robustness of the new SNOMED CT Observables Model as a structure for representing LOINC and NPU laboratory test terminology content; to gain a clearer picture of the differences between LOINC and NPU as background for future discussions about the feasibility of a more unified effort between them to further reduce duplication of efforts; and to identify any country-specific aspects of laboratory test terminology that may not be suitable for inclusion in the international release of SNOMED CT. During this period, users can continue to submit requests for laboratory test terminology to any of the three organizations involved in the trial.

Martin Severs, chair of the IHTSDO Management Board, stated, "The IHTSDO is extremely pleased to have reached the point of an operational trial of cooperative terminology development with the Regenstrief Institute and IFCC-IUPAC. Some of IHTSDO's member countries use both LOINC and SNOMED CT, some use both NPU and SNOMED CT, and others expect SNOMED CT to include the level of laboratory test terminology required to meet their needs. Patients and health-care providers need these standards to work together. We are therefore committed to minimizing patient risk and supporting effective communication, decision support, and health data analysis by ensuring that SNOMED CT can work effectively in combination with either LOINC or NPU in computer systems that support electronic patient records."

Daniel Vreeman, research scientist at RI and assistant research professor at the Indiana University