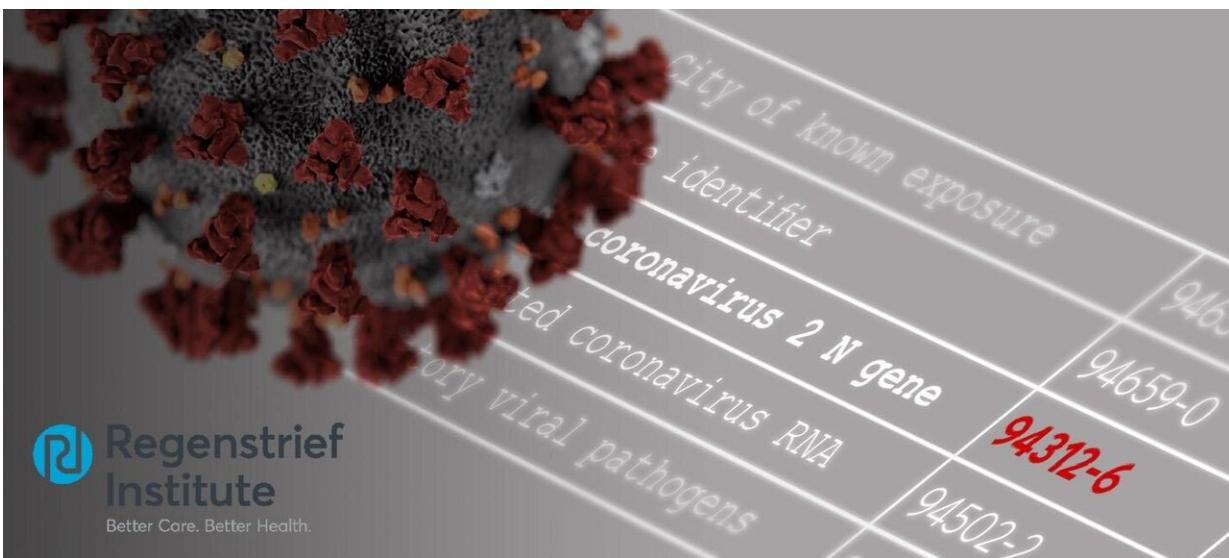# New healthcare codes released, including terms used internationally to track coronavirus

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LOINC, created and maintained by the Regenstrief Institute, is amplifying its global work to help track coronavirus by releasing new standardized codes. LOINC is a lingua franca that is especially important when outbreaks of diseases like COVID-19 occur. The codes are crucial to facilitating tracking of the virus by allowing records to be seamlessly exchanged between health systems and public health entities around the world. LOINC has users in 179 countries. Credit: Regenstrief Institute

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amplifying its global work to help track the coronavirus by releasing new standardized codes for healthcare systems' laboratory tests, clinical observations and other data.

Health systems often have their own format for recording patient information which makes sharing and tracking data between systems difficult. LOINC is a lingua franca that is especially important when outbreaks of diseases like COVID-19 occur. The codes are crucial to facilitating tracking of the virus by allowing records to be seamlessly exchanged between health systems and public health entities around the world. LOINC has users in 179 countries.

In its newest release, LOINC, which stands for Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes, added 1,231 new standardized terms, including about 150 codes related to the coronavirus.

Since January, LOINC has been coordinating with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), public health and reference labs, and in vitro diagnostic manufacturers to create new special use codes to collect and share SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 testing results.

"Sharing interoperable data is vital to tracking and understanding the virus. LOINC codes provide a standard way to represent the lab test data so that the information can be shared and analyzed at a global level," said Swapna Abhyankar, M.D., interim director for LOINC.

In addition to the new COVID-19-related terms, the new LOINC release includes hundreds of new terms for laboratory and clinical test results as well as survey and questionnaire responses, including surveys related to critical issues such as food security and other social determinants of health.

The terminology database now has 93,600 terms.

More information: LOINC codes are free. Version 2.68 is available now. Download it at: loinc.org/news/loinc-version-2 … 1-are-now-available/

Provided by Regenstrief Institute

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