

COVID-19 – advice about coding in General Practice (England)

The aim of this document is to provide practical advice to General practitioners to facilitate the recording of essential information relating to COVID-19 disease and the SARS-CoV-2 virus. We have selected a short list of SNOMED CT concepts from all of those which will be available to GP systems in England once the April UK SNOMED CT release is deployed. This is intended to be a ‘starter list’ covering the most needed descriptions rather than be exhaustive. It is likely to need to be extended in the light of experience as the pandemic unfolds and as new concepts are added.

Rather than looking for specific codes we strongly advise searching for the description required using a ‘string’ such as ‘COVID-19’ or ‘SARS-CoV-2’ where appropriate. For those who wish to know the codes recorded, the Coding columns in the tables below provide the relevant SNOMED CT conceptIDs and also TPP SystemOne Y codes.

We understand that the COVID-19 related content of the February and April UK Emergency SNOMED CT releases is now available, or will be imminently available, in all English GP systems. Once that becomes available, we would strongly recommend that GPs and their supporting staff should use the descriptions laid out in the tables below. In particular they should use the appropriate ***new SNOMED CT descriptions*** in place of the original five emergency system wide local codes containing the name ‘Wuhan’, that were provided in February 2020, as follows:

Old emergency term	New SNOMED CT description
Exposure to 2019-nCoV (Wuhan) infection	Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) infection
Suspected 2019-nCoV (Wuhan) infection	Suspected COVID-19
Confirmed 2019-nCoV (Wuhan) infection	COVID-19
Excluded 2019-nCoV (Wuhan) infection	COVID-19 excluded

In place of “Tested for 2019-nCoV (Wuhan) infection” we would recommend recording either the taking of a swab test or else the performance of a specific test such as “***Detection of SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) using polymerase chain reaction technique***”. Note that there are now also specific and clear descriptions for capturing the results of that test as PCR antigen detected / not detected.

We would also urge practices, when wishing to signify SARS-CoV-2 infection or COVID-19 disease ***not to use the older and less specific coronavirus terms*** such as:

- Exposure to coronavirus infection
- Suspected coronavirus infection
- Disease due to Coronaviridae
- Coronavirus infection
- Pneumonia caused by Human coronavirus
- Pneumonia due to Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus

To record	Look for this Description	SNOMED CT	TPP S1 Y codes
Telephone consultation	Telephone consultation for suspected SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2)	1240451000000106	Y211b
Exposure to COVID-19	Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) infection	1240431000000104	Y20ce
Suspected case of the disease COVID-19	Suspected COVID-19	1240761000000102	Y20cf
Swab taken by HCP	Swab for SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) taken by healthcare professional	1321051000000103	Y229d
Self-swabbing by patient	Self-taken swab for SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) offered	1321041000000101	Y229a
	Self-taken swab for SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) completed	1321031000000105	Y229b
Positive result for PCR (antigen) test	SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) detected	1240581000000104	Y20d1
Negative result for PCR (antigen) test	SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) not detected	1240591000000102	Y20d2
Disease confirmed by lab testing	COVID-19 confirmed by laboratory test	1300721000000109	Y228d
Disease excluded by lab testing	COVID-19 excluded by laboratory test	1321111000000101	Y22a2
Probable case of COVID-19 –NB use with care. Indicates judgement that the disease has been confirmed by clinical picture/other investigations (e.g. imaging)	COVID-19 confirmed using clinical diagnostic criteria	1300731000000106	Y228e
When there is a high level of confidence about diagnosis of COVID-19 - e.g. where confirmed by lab test or where patient has been in close contact with a confirmed case	COVID-19	1240751000000100	Y20fa
Not a case of COVID-19	COVID-19 excluded	1321101000000103	Y22a1

To record	Look for this Description	SNOMED CT	TPP S1 Y codes
Telephone advice about SARS-CoV-2	Advice given about SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) by telephone	1240731000000107	Y212c
Signposting to online notes service for providing proof of coronavirus absence from work. See reference [1] for detail.	Signposting to NHS online isolation note service	1321061000000100	Y22ab
COVID-19 risk stratification – high risk	High risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection	1300561000000107	Y228a
Self-isolation of those with symptoms or who live with someone with symptoms. See reference [2] for detail.	Self-isolation to prevent exposure of community to contagion	1321131000000109	Y228f
Shielding - to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable by minimising all interaction with others. See reference [3] for detail	Shielding of uninfected subject to prevent exposure to contagion	1321151000000102	Y22b0
To represent the performance of a PCR test (note does not record the result of the test)	Detection of SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) using polymerase chain reaction technique	1240511000000106	Y210e

References

- [1] <https://digital.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/isolation-notes>
- [2] <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>
- [3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>