

WELSH INFORMATION STANDARDS BOARD

DSC Notice:	DSCN 2026 / 08
Date of Issue:	1 st May 2026

<p>Welsh Health Circular/Official Letter: N/A</p> <p>Sponsor: Amir Ramzan, Senior Manager – Digital Health Standards & Architecture, Welsh Government</p> <p>Standard Type: Clinical Coding Classification</p> <p>Implementation Date: 1st April 2026</p>	<p>Subject: Implementation of OPCS-4.11 in Wales.</p>
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DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE

A Data Standards Change Notice (DSCN) is an information mandate for a new or revised information standard.

This DSCN was approved by the Welsh Information Standards Board (WISB) at its meeting on 19th March 2026.

WISB Reference: ISRN 2026 / 010

Summary:

This notice gives official notification of approval for the implementation of the Office of Population Census and Surveys Classification of Interventions and Procedures Version 4.11 (OPCS-4.11) within Wales.

Data sets / returns affected:

Admitted patient Care data set (APC ds)
Outpatient data set (OP ds)

Please address enquiries about this Data Standards Change Notice to the Data Standards Team in Digital Health and Care Wales

E-mail: data.standards@wales.nhs.uk

The Welsh Information Standards Board is responsible for appraising information standards. Submission documents and WISB Outcomes relating to the approval of this standard can be found at:

https://nhswales365.sharepoint.com/sites/DHC_DST/Lists/Information%20Standards%20Assurance%20Submission%20Log/AllItems.aspx

DATA STANDARDS CHANGE NOTICE

Introduction

The OPCS-4 Classification of Interventions and Procedures (OPCS-4) is a statistical classification for coding of hospital interventions and procedures undertaken by the NHS. The classification is designed to support and assist in the management of healthcare services at a local level and enable informed analysis of medical data at large scale for national trends. It is produced by the NHS England Terminology and Classifications Service for use across the UK.

The classification is mandatory for use by healthcare providers to support various forms of data collections for secondary uses, e.g. it is mandatory for the Admitted Patient Care data set (APC ds).

The current version of the Office of Population Census and Surveys Classification of Interventions and Procedures, Version 4.10 (OPCS-4.10) was introduced in Wales on April 1st 2023.

A new version of the classification, OPCS-4.11, incorporates 1,747 amendments to the Tabular List. Furthermore, 3,368 modifications have been made to the Alphabetical Index, which now features an additional section.

NHS England's Terminologies and Classifications Service has worked in collaboration with classification leads from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, the NHS, software suppliers, and certified clinical coding trainers (both NHS and commercial) to support the implementation of the new version.

These updates are mandated for use by NHS Wales organisations, effective from 01/04/2026, as set out in CCCN 2026/01.

Description of Change

There are substantial revisions to the guidance and standards contained within OPCS-4.11 compared to previous editions. The classification makes the following changes:

Change Type	Number	Total	Grand Total
New three-character category	65		
New four-character subcategory	572		
Retired three-character category	7		
Retired four-character subcategory	73		
Changed three-character category description	57		
Changed four-character subcategory description	417		
Change to chapter note (new, deleted or changed includes, excludes, notes)	21		
Change to three-character category note only (new, deleted or changed includes, excludes, notes)	181		
Change to four-character subcategory note only (new, deleted or changed includes, excludes, notes)	354		
	1747		
New Index Entry	2719	3368	5115
Deleted Index Entry	649		

In addition to the changes to the classification itself there are significant amendments to the national standards for using OPCS-4:

- 68 Deleted Standards
- 45 Amended Standards
- 28 New Standards

OPCS-4.11 is to be used to assign procedure codes to all patients with a discharge date on or after 1st April 2026.

It must be noted that OPCS-4.11 is the first version of the OPCS-4 classification that will not be available in a physical format as printed books. Access to the classification is solely through the NHS England [Classifications Browser](#).

Data Dictionary Version

The current release: version 4.25 of the NHS Wales Data Dictionary will be the final version published on the existing platform.

The NHS Wales Data Dictionary will be moved to a new and improved platform.

In the interim, please visit [DHCW Data Standards](#) to access notice publications or contact data.standards@wales.nhs.uk

Actions Required

The following actions are mandatory for all users of OPCS within Wales, effective from 1st April 2026:

Health Boards / Trust:

- Use OPCS-4.11 for the assignment of classifications codes. The two volumes of OPCS-4.11 available on NHS England Classification Browser must be used for coding any Finished Consultant Episode (FCE) with a discharge date on or after the 1st April 2026.
- Use the updated OPCS-4.11 National Standards Reference Book. The National Clinical Coding Standards OPCS-4 (2025) must no longer be used for code assignment and must be replaced with the National Clinical Coding Standards OPCS-4 (2026).
- Update IT Systems to ensure all relevant encoder and other appropriate IT systems incorporate OPCS-4.11.

Digital Health and Care Wales:

- Retain responsibility for ensuring affected national applications managed by DHCW are upgraded to support the collection and reporting of OPCS-4.11 codes.
- Ensure that all national systems and reference data using OPCS-4 have been updated to comply with the standard set out in this DSCN.
- Ensure all Welsh clinical coding products (Welsh Standards, training materials, dashboards, etc.) are updated to use OPCS-4.11.