EBMeDS Script Aliases

Background

Patient data are received by the EBMeDS decision support module in a structured form as classification codes from defined compatible coding systems. However, in different countries (and even in one single country) different coding systems with different structures are used. To keep the EBMeDS scripts independent of different coding systems internally, no codes are used inside the scripts. Instead, the codes (or groups of codes) are mapped to *aliases*.

Adding Aliases to a Script

Aliases are added to the EBMeDS database using the EBMeDS Script Description Editor (ESDE). If a script without any added aliases is opened in the editor, the form for adding ("New Alias") is already open. If other aliases are already added to the script, click the "+" icon beneath the existing alias list to open the form.

Reusing Existing Aliases

If you want to reuse an existing alias (which is very common), just enter the alias name in the "Alias name" field, leave all the other fields in the "New Alias" section empty and click any of the "Save" buttons. The alias will now appear in the alias list.

Creating New Aliases

A new alias is given an internationally understandable name in English, and the name must be unique. If you attempt to create a new alias using an existing alias name, you will get an error message in ESDE. Avoid using abbreviations - although they may be well-known in a national setting, they may not be familiar in international use. Blank spaces are not allowed in aliases – if you want to enhance the readabilityuse upper case characters inside the name (e.g. "EssentialHypertension"). Alias names may contain only numbers, characters included in the English alphabet, the slash character ("/") and the hyphen character ("-"). Alias names are case-sensitive.

Each new alias is shortly defined in the "Definition" field. The definition is important when mapping new coding systems to an existing alias. For example, the alias "Anticoagulants" is explicit only according to its definition "Clopidogrel; Acetylsalicylic acid; Warfarin".

The classification codes are written in square brackets using a prefix (namespace) for the coding system (e.g. "CoronaryHeartDisease = [ICD10UK:I210X]"). One pair of square brackets may contain only one classification code (e.g. "Asthma = [ICD10:J45*][ICD10:J46*]". Hierarchic codes (like codes from the ICD-10 classification and the ATC classification for drugs) can be truncated with an asterisk, as in the example above.

In the electronic health record (EHR), the classification codes may not visible to the user at all. For example, drugs are shown as generic or trade names but seldom as codes. To simulate this in the EBMeDS testing environment, each alias can be given a country/language-specific testing name (e.g. "Crestor" for the alias "Rosuvastatin"). These names are used *only when transferring data form ESDE to the testing environment*, where they can also be included in the returning decision support messages (e.g. "The patient is using Crestor"). *The testing name should refer to the first code in a set of square brackets.*

Searching for Existing Aliases

Existing aliases can be searched for using the "Classification Code Aliases" mode of the ESDE All-In-One Search. If an alias suitable for reuse is found in the hit list, it can easily be pasted into the "New Alias" form by dragging the alias name from the hit list. The alias name of the hit list will automatically be selected when moving the mouse cursor over it.

Editing Existing Aliases

Existing aliases can be edited either in ESDE by left-clicking the alias in the alias list of a script or in the Alias Hit List of an alias search or using the Code Mapping Tool included in the TOOLS of ESDE. With the Code Mapping Tool, aliases can be edited systematically, for example when a new country joins the EBMeDS community.

Be very careful with changing alias mappings, as changes will not only affect the current script, but all scripts using the alias in question! A list of all scripts using the alias is shown at the top of the alias editing page in ESDE. If you have to change an alias name, *you must change the corresponding names in the JavaScript code of all scripts using the alias!* Also be careful with changing the code set for an existing alias - *the change must be applicable for all scripts using the alias.* If you are not certain of the effects that will follow from changing an existing alias that is used by other scripts, consider creating a new alias for the script you are working with instead.

Deleting Aliases

If you want to delete an alias from the alias list of a script, right-click the alias in the alias list and confirm the deletion. If the alias is used in other scripts, it will not be deleted from the alias database. If the alias was used only in the actual script, it will also be deleted from the alias database. This makes it possible to delete e.g. alias names with typing error permanently.

Aliases cannot be deleted from the Alias Hits list in the All-In-One Search.

Supported Classification Code Systems

The supported classification code systems, Object Identifier Descriptors (OIDs) and prefixes can be viewed in real-time in ESDE (DOCUMENTATION -> STATISTICS).