WHODrug Global March 2021 version now available

The March 2021 version of WHODrug Global is now available. The new version can be downloaded from the WHODrug Download Area by designated delivery contacts only and accessed via WHODrug login; both available on the WHO website. The March 2021 version of the WHODrug global dictionary contains over 56,000 drug names from 37 languages.

Next WHODrug monthly webinar

Sign up now for our WHO Drug global webinar, scheduled for Tuesday 9 March 2021 and available in two sessions, 6:00 and 17:00 CET (Central European Time). WHO staff will be covering the latest COVID-19 related WHODrug updates, the launch of WHODrug LINK Korea and the latest features now available to WHODrug users, among other topics. WHO Drug users are encouraged to submit questions in advance to whodrug.update@who.int. Register now.

COVID-19 update

Uptake Monitoring Centre (UMC) is continuously monitoring the COVID-19 situation. Below, we’d like to summarise the status of our current operations, and also report on our real-time COVID-19 related initiatives:

- All UMC’s WHODrug related operations and services have continued, and remain without disruption.
- The World Health Organization Standard Drug Group (WHO SDG) developed specifically as a response to COVID-19 has been re-assessed. Drugs and solutions for COVID-19: Furthermore, the COVID-19 vaccine substrategy is now more clearly defined, and the development of COVID-19 vaccines will be addressed in a separate, dedicated topic.
- To support the anticipated need to continuously monitor the adverse event profile of COVID-19 vaccines, the names of COVID-19 vaccine substances in WHODrug Global have been reviewed and updated in terms of added specificity.
- UMC continues to strengthen the virtual event programme for WHODrug users. As well as monthly webinars, UMC is also planning event individual user group webinars for 2021, for more information see below.

Now available: WHODrug Link Korea

From June 2021, local Korean drug sets are required to be submitted for domestic Korean unapproved drug reaction (ADR) cases and WHODrug Global MIPS and CAS number are required for foreign ADR cases. WHODrug Link Korea, available from 1 March 2021, converts codexes from WHODrug Global to local Korean codexes, thereby facilitating the regulatory submission process for users of WHODrug Global. Link Korea is available as an add-on to the WHODrug Global subscription. Read more in the next issue.

WHODrug Koda improvements

WHODrug includes UMC’s proprietary drug coding engine, developed to increase drug coding efficiency and consistency, and available to WHODrug users since 2018. To more about what Koda is and how you can use it, please watch a short video.

For March 2021, Koda has been improved in terms of both functionality and performance:

- In addition to its variety, range of administration and indication, WHODrug Koda can now also check country information for the drug name coding principles. The country information will fully replace the so-called non-unique drug name scenarios in WHODrug Global and can be particularly helpful when coding post-monitoring safety drug data. The country information can be accessed via the button on the left-side taskbar in the WHODrug back-end for the Koda web application
- Based on user requests, WHODrug improves coding algorithms have been further improved. Specifically, Koda is now providing a more precise coding to permit better social global records
- After an executed understanding of WHODrug Koda’s performance and functionality, it is seen possible to generate high-level statistical reports from the Koda web application. The machine-learning model has been reviewed and improved for 2021, as for new version of WHODrug Global, based on feedback from users and new data from the background.

For more information or to access the trial version of WHODrug Koda, available to all WHODrug users, please contact the WHO Drug Support.

Reminder: WHODrug Enhanced no longer available

WHODrug enhanced has been discontinued, and the last release available is 1 September 2020. WHODrug Global is the only dictionary type available from March 2021 and onwards.

More information is available in the next issue for those needing to upgrade coded data from WHODrug Enhanced to WHODrug Global.

Upcoming file changes

To under the latest needs related to changes in regulation requirements and technical developments, UMC is pleased to announce three forthcoming file modifications for the WHODrug global data set and code files:

1. Standardisation of the letter case in the drug format to be implemented in the September 2021 release
2. Inclusion of the substance length field to 250 characters (to be implemented in the March 2022 release)
3. Updated coding rules and values to be implemented in the March 2022 release.

To learn more about the upcoming changes, please refer to the UMC website or contact the WHO Drug Support.

WHODrug User Group meetings 2021

Seven WHODrug User Group meetings are planned for 2021. All these events will be virtual and are aimed to bring together users working at organisations with a valid WHODrug licence. Read more and sign up on the UMC website.

- March 2021 (date open for registration)
- Europe, 16 April 2021
- Asia, 27 July 2021
- USA, 15 July 2021
- Europe 2022
- Regions of Africa, 2021
- Special global conferences, 2021

*Dates for these events will be announced later.

WHODrug web course update

To address the developing needs for online training, UMC will implement a new, more powerful and flexible Learning Management System (LMS) for both the WHODrug and pharmacovigilance portals. The new platform is planned to be introduced in early 2021 and more information will follow.

Did you know…

- That the new online service application WHODrug Access Manager is now available? WHO Drug Access Manager makes it possible for specifically appointed contacts at each organization to administer WHO Drug users accounts themselves, according to the organization WHODrug global subscription. Read more on the UMC website on contact Whodrugadmin@who.int for more information on how to get started.
- That the WHODrug User Guide and the WHODrug Best Practices document are now also available in Chinese? Please visit the WHODrug webpage to download your printed copy today.

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Whodrug Newsletter

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