ICH M11: Technical Specification for the Clinical Protocol Template

Step 2 document – to be released for comments

14 March 2025

Legal Notice

Background

- **This document has been signed off as a *Step 2* document (14 March 2025) to be issued by the ICH Regulatory Members for public consultation**

- **This document was developed based on a Concept Paper (14 November 2018) and a Business Plan (14 November 2018)**

- **Anticipating finalization as a *Step 4* document to be implemented in the local regional regulatory system: November 2025**

Key Principles

- **The Technical Specification (TS) is a technical representation of the M11 Clinical Protocol Template (Template), designed to support electronic data exchange while aligning with the M11 Guideline and Template.**

- **In October 2022, the regulatory organizations of the ICH M11 Expert Working Group (EWG) published the draft M11 TS for public consultation with the Template and Guideline.**

- **During the 2022 public consultation, the TS was incomplete in certain areas. Specifically, elements such as cardinality, term definitions, conformance and relationships had not yet been finalized.**

- **M11 has updated the TS to include the incomplete elements.**

Key Principles

- **The TS contains terminology managed by Clinical Data Interchange Standards Consortium (CDISC) on behalf of ICH. The terminology underwent a public review by the CDISC in 2024, and the Template and TS reflect the outcomes of that review.**

- **A second public consultation on the TS is being conducted to provide an opportunity to review and comment on the updated version.**

- **The second public consultation is <u>solely</u> on the updated TS.**

- **The updated Template is provided for reference only to assist in reviewing the TS and is not open for public comment, having been thoroughly reviewed in the 2022 consultation and subsequently updated in response to comments received.**

Technical Specification (TS) Objectives and Scope

Objectives

- **Promote structured common core content**

- **Define content specifications for electronic exchange**

- **Focus on relevant content use and re-use**

- **Enable development of a data model and an open, non-proprietary exchange message standard**

- **Maintain flexibility for technical innovation and region-specific use**

Technical Specification (TS) Objectives and Scope

Scope

- **The TS serves as a technical representation of the ICH M11 Template.**

- **It is aligned with the latest version of the ICH M11 Guideline and Template, but with flexibility in addressing data exchange needs per ICH and those of regional authorities.**

- **The TS includes detailed descriptions of the structured content components (for example, specific data fields and blocks of text-based content), along with other defining attributes and business rules as established in the Template.**

Examples of TS Terms and Definitions

Term (Variable)	[Intervention Assignment Method]
Data Type	Valid Value
Data (D), Value (V) or Heading (H)	V
Definition	CNEW For review purpose, see definition of the controlled terminology below The process used to assign trial participants to a trial intervention or trial arm.
User Guidance	Intervention assignment method - Do NOT state block size.
Conformance	Required
Cardinality	One to one; One to Sponsor Protocol Identifier
Relationship content from ToC representing the protocol hierarchy	1.1.2
Value	Randomisation (C25196); Stratification (C25689); Stratified Randomisation (CNEW); Other (C17649); or Not Applicable (C48660)
Business rules	**Value Allowed**: Yes **Relationship**: Row title identifier; Sponsor Protocol Identifiers **Concept**: CNEW
Repeating and/or Reuse Rules	No

Examples of TS Terms and Definitions

NCI C-Code	M11 Preferred Term	Draft Definition
C25196	Randomisation	The process of assigning trial participants to treatment or control groups using an element of chance to determine the assignments in order to reduce bias.
C25689	Stratification	Grouping defined by important prognostic factors measured at baseline.
C147145	Stratified Randomisation	The process of grouping trial participants into strata according to important prognostic factors and then assigning participants within each stratum to different treatment or control groups using an element of chance and in order to reduce bias.

Summary of Technical Specification Content

- **<u>Structured Protocol Elements</u>: Clearly defined, standardized sections (e.g., study objectives, endpoints, eligibility criteria, study design).**

- **<u>Controlled Terminology:</u> Use of standardized vocabulary for consistent interpretation globally.**

- **<u>Data Structure & Organization</u>: Clear guidance on structuring protocol information for digital use and automated processes.**

Considerations

- **The Technical Specification, as well as the Template have been developed in consultation with relevant ICH topic-specific guidelines. (e.g., E1, E2A-E2F, E3, E5, E6, E8, E9, E11, E12, E17, E20).**

Conclusions

- **The second public consultation on the ICH M11 Technical Specification (TS) provides stakeholders an opportunity to review finalized complete TS.**

- **The updated TS now incorporates previously incomplete elements, including cardinality, definitions, and terminology alignment, reflecting both prior public feedback and expert working group discussions.**

- **Updated M11 Protocol Template, refined through prior public consultations and standards reviews, is provided solely for reference to aid understanding and review of the TS.**

Contact

- **For any questions, please contact the ICH Secretariat:**

  admin@ich.org