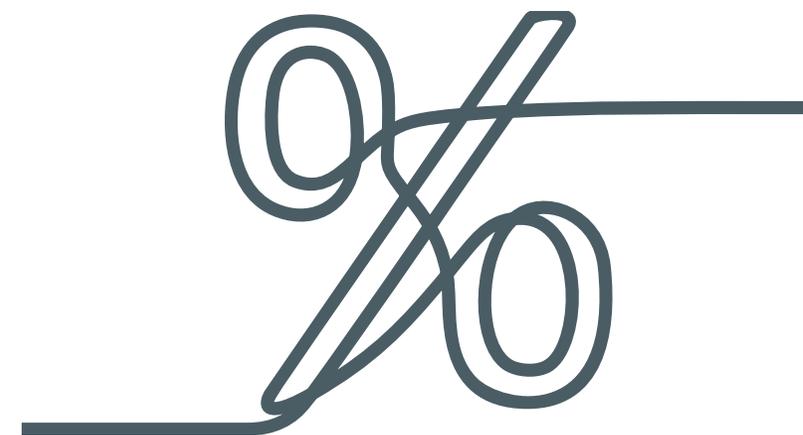


# NHS CLINICAL CODING



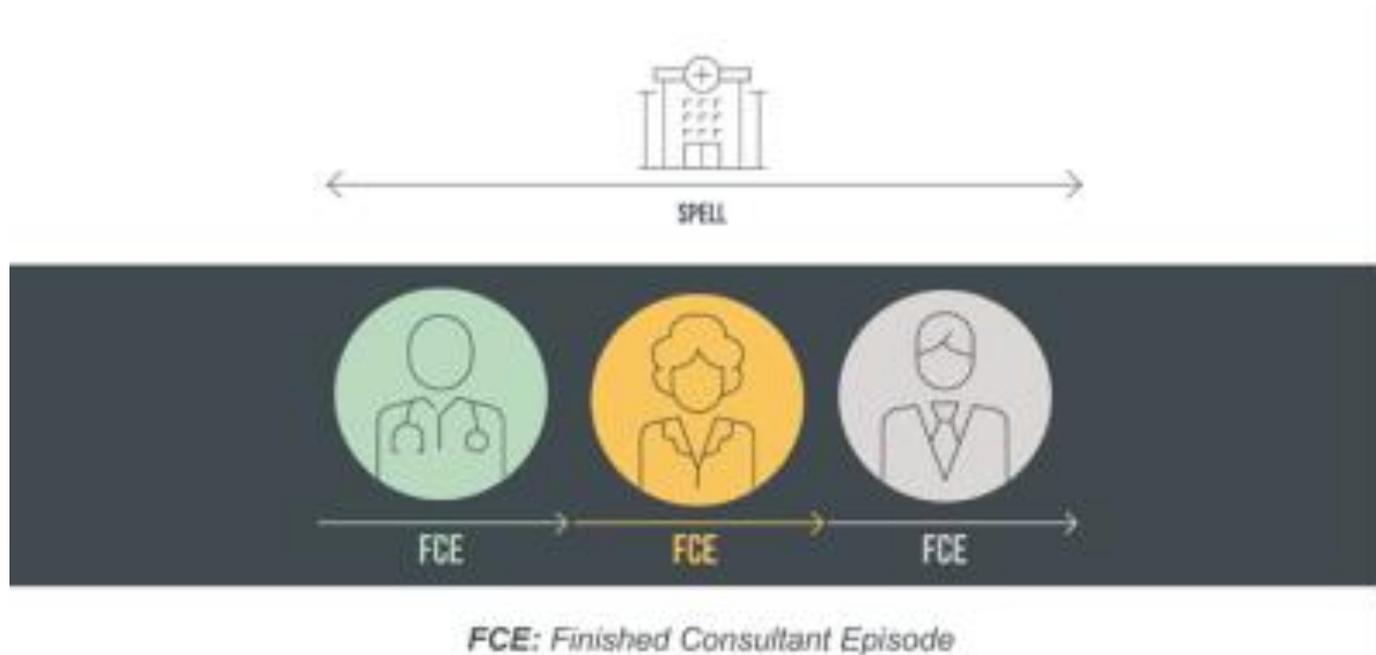
# WHAT IS CLINICAL CODING?

Clinical Coding is "the translation of medical terminology as written by the clinician to describe a patient's complaint, problem, diagnosis, treatment or reason for seeking medical attention, into a coded format" which is nationally and internationally recognised.

It is usually done after the patient has been discharged and there are strict deadlines that need to be adhered to for data submission.



# HOW DOES CLINICAL CODING WORK?

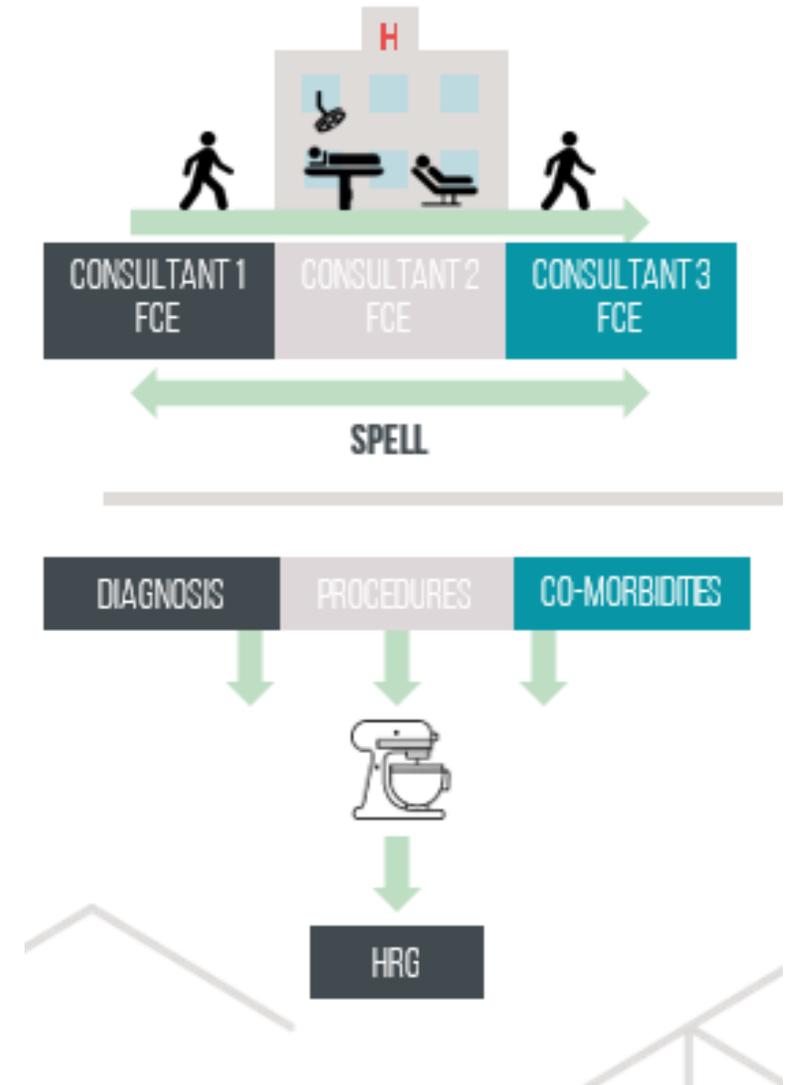


- Spell = A patient's hospital stay from the point of admission to discharge
- During their stay, a patient may be under the care of different consultants. This may be due to a change in shift, ward or specialty.
- Finished Consultant Episode (FCE) = the time period under each consultant.
- A spell can be made up of single or multiple FCEs.

Clinical Coders code diagnoses, co-morbidities, complications and any procedures undertaken for each FCE.

# HOW DO WE GET FROM TREATMENT TO CODED EPISODE?

- All Care delivered during a patient episode is documented in the patient notes.
- Once the episode is complete, the notes are sent to clinical coding – where trained clinical coders carefully read through the notes and allocate the appropriate alphanumeric codes.
- For diagnoses, they use the International Classification of Diseases 10th Edition (ICD-10), which comprises over 16000 codes.
- For procedures and operations, the OPCS Classification of Interventions and Procedures version 4.9 which has over 4000 codes.
- The codes are entered in computer software which determines the healthcare resource group (HRG) most, but not all HRGs have an associated tariff.



# WHAT ARE HEALTHCARE RESOURCE GROUPS?

- A Healthcare Resource Group (HRG) is a grouping of diagnoses &/or procedures which are similar in terms of care delivered and the resource used.
- In order to reflect the complexity of care delivered, HRGs capture:
  - Main condition treated/investigated
  - Procedures/investigations performed
  - comorbidities
  - complications
  - Age
  - length of stay
- HRGs offer organisations the ability to understand their activity in terms of the types of patients they care for and the treatments they undertake.



# WHY IS CLINICAL CODING SO IMPORTANT?

- Clinical coding provides the information that underpins almost all the data flows within the hospital.
- It can be used for:
  - **Clinical Governance:** Clinical Audit, Risk Analysis, Mortality data
  - **Quality Improvement:** Improving patient pathways, clinical research, treatment effectiveness
  - **Epidemiology:** Health trends, Etiology studies, clinical indicators
  - **Benchmarking:** Reducing variation, model hospital
  - **Commissioning:** casemix planning, development of new services
  - **Financial Flows:** National Tariff Income, Cost Analysis



# THE CHALLENGE

- Coders are only able to use information that has been documented in the clinical notes. Incomplete or unclear documentation has been repeatedly shown as a weak link in the data quality chain.

## Top Coding Tips:

### CLEAR

Write clearly and legibly type if possible

Use appropriate language

Check with your organisation as some have agreements to accept certain terms



Presumed  
Probable  
Treat as  
Working diagnosis



Possible  
Impression  
Suspected/?  
Differential diagnosis



## COMPLETE

Ensure all diagnoses & procedures are recorded in detail  
Document all relevant co-morbidities



Type 2 diabetes  
Musculoskeletal Chest Pain  
Ischaemic Heart Disease  
Constipation  
Anaemia



Diabetes  
Chest pain  
Patient discharged on iron  
tablets or laxatives

## UNDERSTANDABLE

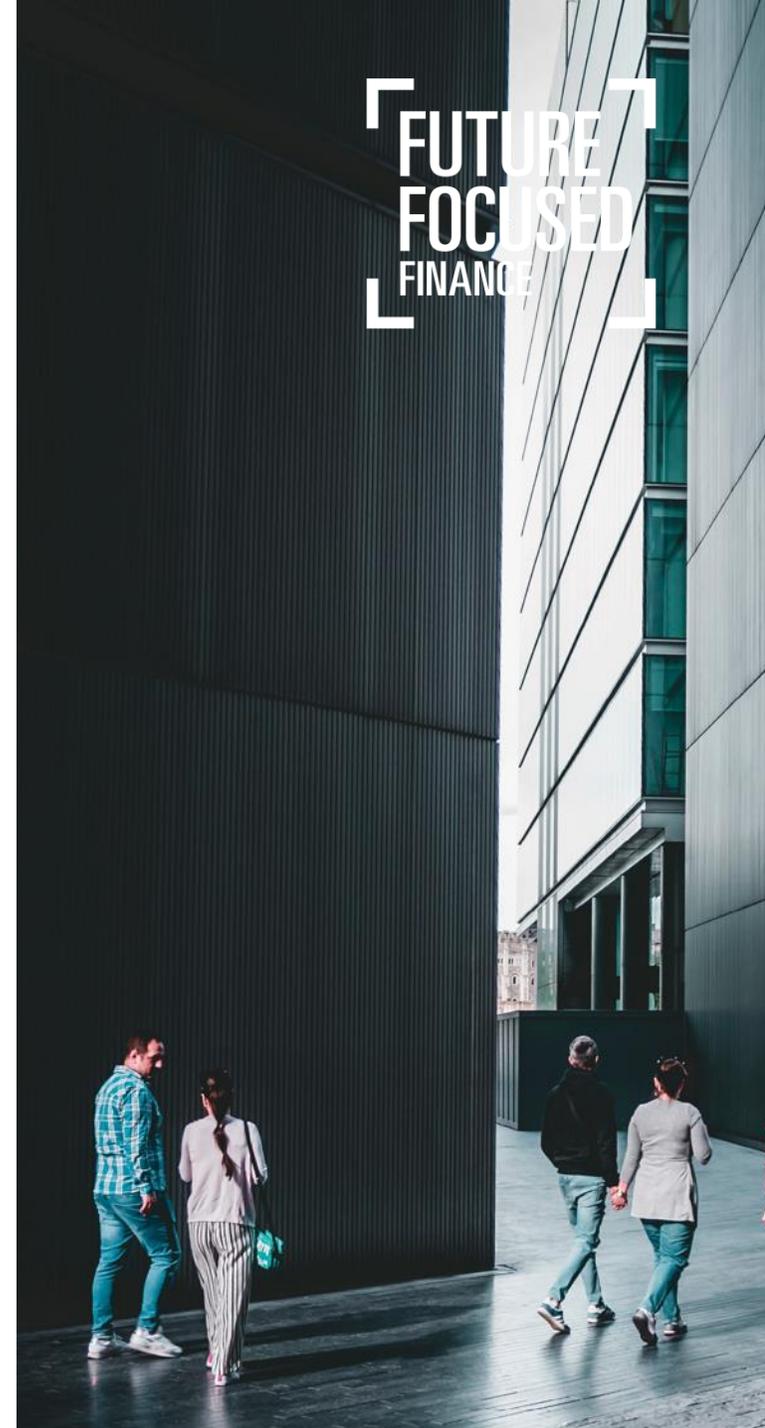
Abbreviations & Short-Hand cannot be coded  
Coders are not allowed to interpret investigations or numbers



Hypokalaemia  
Morbidly obese  
Trial of Forceps/ Tracheo-oesophageal  
fistula/ Tetralogy of Fallot



↓K  
BMI 45  
TOF



## ACCESSIBLE

Make Sure the Coding Team know where key information is recorded

Paper notes:

Medical/Nursing notes/AHP and ensure filed appropriately

Electronic:

If using different software packages, ensure coding team know where to look

**QUESTIONS?**





Future-Focused Finance is a national programme designed to engage everyone in improving NHS Finance to support the delivery of quality services for patients. We want to bring finance staff at all levels of the profession together with the teams we work with in our own organisations and make sure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge, methods and opportunities to influence the decisions affecting our services. We believe by working together in this way we can harness our diverse and talented NHS workforce to produce high quality services and reduce waste in NHS spending.

The programme consists of national and regional events, networks, resources and talent development programmes – all designed to advance the understanding of finance in the NHS. Underpinning all of our work are commitments to value the diversity within NHS finance teams and to challenge behaviours that contribute to inequality in access to development and opportunities for some.