Using READ codes

The structure of READ codes allows almost anything to be coded in the computer record. It does mean, however, that we must be rigid about our coding structure to allow complete and accurate database search results.

Record should be coded according to the following structure:

Symptoms	Chapter 1
Examination	Chapter 2
Investigations	Chapters 3-8
Administrative	Chapter 9
Diagnoses	Chapters A-S
Medication	Chapters a to s

Note that READ codes are case sensitive (ie "a" is NOT the same as "A"). For "working" diagnoses when a definitive diagnosis is not yet established, use chapter R (symptoms signs and ill-defined conditions) for the current problem rather than chapter 1 (chapter 1 should only be used for describing symptoms, whereas chapter R should be used for working diagnoses).

READ abbreviations

OS	Other specified: Only use when a definitive code is not available (rare!). Always appears at the bottom of a pick list.
NOS	Not otherwise specified: Only use when a definitive code is not available (rare!). Always appears at the bottom of a pick list.
EC	Elsewhere classified classified elsewhere in code, usually referring to an underlying cause of a particular disorder.
NEC	Not elsewhere classified: no matching subclassification.
SO	Site of: For determining site of an operation.
D	Diagnosis: Chapter R codes for working diagnoses, when a specific diagnosis is not yet ascertained.
M	Morphology of neoplasms: Subchapter BB of READ codes.
V	Supplementary factors influencing health status, but not including illness eg "normal pregnancy".

You do not need to learn codes to use the Read code system (although it can sometimes make it quicker to use). Type in the term that you wish to code, and use the pick lists to focus in further. How quickly you reach your desired term depends on what you type eg: for acute frontal sinusitis, you will get the appropriate term more quickly by typing *front* than *acute*.

READ code chapter headings

Chapter Contents

0	Occupations
1	History/symptoms
2	Examination/signs
3	Diagnostic procedures
4	Laboratory procedures
5	Radiology/medical physics
6	Preventative procedures
7	Operations and procedures
8	Other therapeutic procedures
9	Administration

Chapter Contents

A	Infectious/parasitic diseases
B	Neoplasms
C	Endocrine/metabolic
D	Blood diseases
E	Mental disorders
F	Nervous system/senses
G	Circulatory system
H	Respiratory system
J	Digestive system
K	Genito-urinary system
L	Pregnancy/childbirth/puerperium
M	Skin/subcutaneous tissue
N	Musculoskeletal
P	Congenital anomalies
Q	Perinatal conditions
R	Ill-defined conditions/working diagnoses
S	Injury/poisoning
T	Causes of injury/poisoning