Introducing the OCL Squad Model

OCL is rolling out an **OCL Squad Model**—a new way for contributors to collaborate, build, and innovate together. Inspired by the OpenMRS squad approach, this model organizes small, self-driven teams that take ownership of key projects, making it easier to get involved and drive meaningful impact. OCL Squads are the primary way that the OCL community collectively works toward the OCL Community Roadmap. Whether you're a developer, implementer, or just passionate about open terminology solutions, there's a place for you. Check out the squads, see where you fit, and join us in shaping the future of OCL!

1. What is the OCL Squad Model?

The OCL Squad Model is an adaptation of the proven OpenMRS squad approach—small, cross‑functional, self-organizing teams that own end-to-end projects. In the OCL community, this model decentralizes decision making and empowers volunteers to drive innovation, prioritize work, and build tools that directly respond to community needs. Each squad is given autonomy over its tasks and cadence, which leads to improved transparency, community-driven development, and a culture of shared ownership. By shifting from centralized weekly calls (e.g. OCL Dev, Architecture, Product and Design calls) to focused squad activities with monthly cross-squad syncs, we create an environment where collaboration and rapid iteration are front and center.

2. Which Squads is OCL starting with?

OCL TermBrowser v3 Launch Squad

Launch the next generation TBv3 built for both terminology consumer and authors

OCL FHIR Core Squad

Implement robust support for the FHIR Terminology Publishing Ecosystem within OCL, including enhanced FHIR R4B services

OCL Mapper^beta Squad

Launch the new OCL Mapper (beta) and prototype AI-supported matching algorithms to streamline mapping of content to target terminologies

Content Squad

A joint squad to ensure that priority content, like CIEL, LOINC, base FHIR packages, etc. remain current and accessible for the OCL, CIEL, and OpenMRS communities

OCL for OpenMRS Squad

Strengthen dictionary management in OCL so that is easier and more powerful than managing a concept dictionary directly in the OpenMRS admin interface

3. How do OCL Squads work?

Each Squad is empowered to self-organize and take full ownership of its project:
- **Autonomy & Cadence:** Squads set their own meeting schedules and work rhythms to best suit their project needs. Squad call schedules will be maintained in a public Google Calendar.
- **Documentation & Project Management:** Each squad maintains its own running notes, documents progress, and manages its tasks via dedicated projects. OCL provides Google Drive templates for notes and materials and uses GitHub Projects for tickets, or some squads may use infrastructure provided by another community (e.g. OpenMRS, HL7, etc.).
- **Squad Leads:** Each squad has its own lead(s), who volunteer to coordinate squad calls and activities.

- **Clear Goals:** Each squad is responsible for delivering on specific objectives outlined in the community roadmap (see [2025 OCL Community Roadmap](#)). They champion both the technical execution and community engagement for their projects.
- **Flexible, Agile Structure:** This model not only encourages rapid iteration but also allows community members to join the squad that matches their interests and expertise, ensuring broad participation and a transparent path for contributions.
- **Regular Coordination:** Instead of our previous centralized call structure (i.e. weekly Dev, and Architecture calls, and biweekly Product and Design calls), all squads will report and align on progress during a periodic cross-squad call (e.g. OCL Community Showcases)

4. Who are the Squad Leads?

Squad leads are volunteers who have offered to help coordinate squad calls and activities.

Squad	Lead(s)	Schedule
[OCL TermBrowser v3 Squad](#)	Joe Amlung	Weekly Tue 8am Eastern
[OCL FHIR Core Squad](#)	Italo Macedo	Bi-weekly Wed 10am Eastern
[OCL Mapper Squad](#)	Michael Bontyes	Weekly Thu 8am Eastern
[Content Squad](#)	Andy Kanter	*TBD*
[OCL for OpenMRS Squad](#)	*TBD*	Weekly Wed 9am Eastern

5. What about the weekly OCL Dev and OCL Architecture calls?

After serving us well for the last 3 years, the weekly OCL Dev and OCL Architecture calls will no longer continue. These calls have been instrumental in maintaining communication and coordination, but they've also emphasized a centralized approach that hasn't fully tapped into the potential of our community contributors. Most activity will shift to the new Squads, and we will also host a weekly OCL Platform call for cross-cutting issues and to maintain OCL Online and community infrastructure.

6. Are there other OCL community calls that I should be aware of?

- **Quarterly OCL Community Showcase** – Quarterly call to showcase the work of OCL community members, demo new features, and discuss upcoming priorities for the next quarter.
- **Weekly OCL Platform Team** – Technical discussion for cross-cutting issues and maintenance of OCL Online and community/devops infrastructure,
- **Drop-in Office Hours (TBD)** – For people who may not be ready to dive directly into a squad discussion, the OCL community intends to offer drop-in office hours (possibly biweekly or monthly) to field more general questions. Let us know if you're interested to help us prioritize planning.

Resources:
- OCL TBv3 Feedback Chat: https://chat.openconceptlab.org/t/ocl-v3-feedback/121
- Running Notes