

2022 ICD-10-CM Guidelines Released

August 06, 2021

Released earlier than usual, the fiscal year (FY) 2022 *ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting* became available online Monday, July 12, and include instructions for assigning novel code U09.9 *Post COVID-19 condition* (found under Section I.C.1.g.1). Familiarize yourself with the following new and revised guidance, effective October 1, to ensure proper diagnosis coding and reporting.

Updates to General Coding Guidelines

Section I.B.13 – LATERALITY

Under this section, the following paragraph is added:

SECTION I.B.14 – DOCUMENTATION BY CLINICIANS OTHER THAN THEPATIENT’S PROVIDER

When laterality is not documented by the patient’s provider, code assignment for the affected side may be based on medical record documentation from other clinicians. If there is conflicting medical record documentation regarding the affected side, the patient’s attending provider should be queried for clarification. Codes for “unspecified” side should rarely be used, such as when the documentation in the record is insufficient to determine the affected side and it is not possible to obtain clarification.”

Changes to this section are primarily clarifications surrounding coding based on another clinician’s medical documentation. Guideline updates appear in bold text .

“There are a few exceptions when code assignment may be based on medical record documentation from clinicians who are not the patient’s provider (i.e., physician or other qualified healthcare practitioner legally accountable for establishing the patient’s diagnosis). **In this context, “clinicians” other than the patient’s provider refer to healthcare professionals permitted, based on regulatory or accreditation requirements or internal hospital policies, to document in a patient’s official medical record.**

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These exceptions include codes for:

- ⇒ **Body Mass Index (BMI)**
- ⇒ **Depth of non-pressure chronic ulcers**
- ⇒ **Pressure ulcer stage**
- ⇒ **Coma scale**
- ⇒ **NIH stroke scale (NIHSS)**
- ⇒ **Social determinants of health (SDOH)**
- ⇒ **Laterality**
- ⇒ **Blood alcohol level**

This information is typically, **or may be**, documented by other clinicians involved in the care of the patient (e.g., a dietitian often documents the BMI, a nurse often documents the pressure ulcer stages, and an emergency medical technician often documents the coma scale). However, the associated diagnosis (such as overweight, obesity, acute stroke, pressure ulcer, **or a condition classifiable to category F10, Alcohol related disorders**) must be documented by the patient's provider. If there is conflicting medical record documentation, either from the same clinician or different clinicians, the patient's attending provider should be queried for clarification. The BMI, coma scale, NIHSS, blood alcohol level codes and codes for social determinants of health should only be reported as secondary diagnoses. ***See Section I.C.21.c.17 for additional information regarding coding social determinants of health.***

SECTION I.B.18 – USE OF SIGN/SYMPTOM/UNSPECIFIED CODES

New to this section is the following paragraph:

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“As stated in the introductory section of these official coding guidelines, a joint effort between the healthcare provider and the coder is essential to achieve complete and accurate documentation, code assignment, and reporting of diagnoses and procedures. The importance of consistent, complete documentation in the medical record cannot be overemphasized. Without such documentation accurate coding cannot be achieved. The entire record should be reviewed

Changes to Chapter-Specific Coding Guidance

Chapter-specific updates to the ICD-10-CM guidelines for FY2022 include:

SECTION I.C.4.A – DIABETES MELLITUS

Major changes include modifications to the following sections:

- ⇒ Section I.C.4.a.3 – Diabetes mellitus and the use of insulin, oral hypoglycemics, and injectable non-insulin drugs
- ⇒ Section I.C.4.a.6.a – Secondary diabetes mellitus and the use of insulin, oral hypoglycemic drugs, or injectable non-insulin drugs

SECTION I.C.12.A.2 – UNSTAGEABLE PRESSURE ULCERS

Here, ICD-10-CM adds some additional context to consider:

- ⇒ If during an encounter, the stage of an unstageable pressure ulcer is revealed after debridement, assign only the code for the stage revealed following debridement.