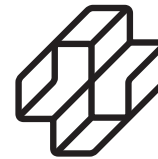


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Coding Q&A

By Jennifer Swindle, RHIT, CCS-P

Q: On Oct. 1, Medicare is eliminating several ICD-9-CM codes we use regularly, including "disorders of iron metabolism" (275.0) and "body mass index 40 and over, adult" (V85.4). Why is this being done and what codes should be reported in their place?

A: Each year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) ICD-9-CM Coordination and Maintenance Committee, in conjunction with specialists in the field, reviews and revises both diagnosis and procedure codes to keep them current with advances in medicine and emerging technologies. New, deleted, and

revised codes take effect at the beginning of the new fiscal year on Oct. 1 and are published in June in the *Federal Register* and on the CMS website.

Often, codes are revised to make them more specific. In the case of "disorders of iron metabolism," the broad category code is being replaced with "hereditary hemochromatosis" (275.01), "hemochromatosis due to repeated red blood cell transfusions" (275.02), "other hemochromatosis" (275.03), and "other disorders of iron metabolism" (275.09). Similarly, the single V code for body mass index over 40 is being replaced with five codes, V85.41 to V85.45,

denoting ascending degrees of obesity from BMI 40-45 up to BMI 70+. These more specific codes should be reported in place of the earlier codes.

Other new diagnosis codes include H1N1 and avian flu virus codes and jaw pain. Among the new procedure codes are several specific sinus carotid stimulation implants replacing the previous blanket code, and revisions of spinal fusion procedures. Summaries of all changes can be found at www.cms.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/07_summarytables.asp#TopOfPage.

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