

Documentation and Coding: Social Determinants of Health

At Healthfirst, we are committed to helping providers accurately document and code their patients' health records. This tip sheet is intended to assist providers and coding staff with the documentation and ICD-10-CM selection of services submitted to Healthfirst specifically for **Social Determinants of Health**. It provides information from industry sources about proper coding practice. However, this document does not represent or guarantee that Healthfirst will cover and/or pay for services outlined. Coverage decisions are based on the terms of the applicable evidence of coverage and the provider's participation agreement. This includes the determination of any amounts that Healthfirst or the member owes the provider.

Since ICD-10 does not capture circumstances that impact a patient's health, a subcategory of Z codes (Z55–Z60 and Z62–Z65; see below) can be used to document socioeconomic and psychosocial issues—such as employment status, occupational risks, housing and economic status, social environment, and family dynamic—that may affect patients. Proper tracking of social determinants of health (SDH) can help identify solutions to improve the health of patients and communities.

Z55: Problems related to education and literacy

Z56: Problems related to employment and unemployment

Z57: Occupational exposure to risk factors

Z58: Problems related to physical environment

Z59: Problems related to housing and economic circumstances

Z60: Problems related to social environment

Z62: Problems related to upbringing

Z63: Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances

Z64: Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances

Z65: Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances

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Addressing the social determinants of health begins with identifying a patient's needs and measuring their impact. Here are some helpful resources:

- **Z codes from the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10-CM)**: a group of codes within the ICD-10 (diagnostic) codes that helps providers capture a patient's socioeconomic and/or psychosocial needs
- **Accountable Health Communities (AHC) Health-Related Social Needs Screening Tool**: identify needs related to social determinants for providers participating in the CMS AHC model
- **PRAPARE tool** (Protocol for Responding to and Assessing Patients' Assets, Risks, and Experiences): developed by the **National Association of Community Health Centers** for providers to collect the data to better understand and act on their patients' social determinants of health
- **Health Leads Screening Toolkit**: a comprehensive resource to help clinicians assess patients for adverse social determinants

Questions?

Contact us at [#Risk_Adjustments_and_clinical_Documentation@healthfirst.org](mailto:Risk_Adjustments_and_clinical_Documentation@healthfirst.org).

Reference: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2021-coding-guidelines-updated-12162020.pdf>