

Eli's Rehab Report

Reader Question: Inpatient Spinal Injury Evaluation

Question: What kind of diagnosis code should I use for a spinal cord injury admitted as an inpatient for yearly evaluation? Is there a V code or Status Post diagnosis code?

North Carolina Subscriber

Answer: The short answer to your question is that V70.0 (routine general medical examination at a health care facility) would probably be the most accurate code for this visit. However, coverage for such a V code is questionable, and your claim will probably not be easily reimbursable without a more comprehensive reason for the visit. You want to avoid this being classified by the insurer as a well visit, which would fall under the preventive medicine guidelines and would not be payable. Contact the physician to determine whether there is a more specific reason that he or she admitted the patient to the hospital for an evaluation. Even though your notes indicate the patient had a spinal cord injury, there may be a more serious problem such as partial or late-effect paralysis (344.9).