

Eli's Rehab Report

You Be the Coder: ICD-9 for Leg Weakness

Test your coding knowledge. Determine how you would code this situation before looking at the box below for the answer.

Question: We are using the paralysis/paraplegia code ([ICD-9 344.1](#)) to describe lower extremity/leg weakness due to spinal stenosis. Is this correct? My office manager thinks 780.79 would be more accurate.

New Jersey Subscriber

Answer: The paraplegia code (344.1) is not the most accurate code to use when referring to leg weakness because this code describes an inability to move the limbs, and your patient is simply experiencing weakness. Your office manager's recommendation of 780.79 (Other malaise and fatigue) does not describe your patient's condition very well either because it applies to overall weakness, such as when a patient is feeling lethargic or sluggish. You should use 728.9 (Unspecified disorder of muscle, ligament, and fascia) with spinal stenosis (724.00-724.09) as the secondary ICD-9.