

Psychiatry Coding & Reimbursement Alert

Reader Question: Report Dx Codes Based on Which Substance or Drug is Abused

Question: Recently, our psychiatrist reviewed a patient who has been abusing laxatives. He is an obese patient and was using these laxatives extensively with the objective of losing weight. Our clinician counseled the patient about the perils of abusing these laxatives. What diagnosis code should I report for this patient's abuse of laxatives?

Michigan Subscriber

Answer: When your clinician performs counseling of a patient against abuse of drugs, you will have to report the reason for this service with a counseling diagnosis code. In addition, you will have to report a separate ICD-10 code that helps identify the exact drug or substance the patient is abusing.

In your case scenario, you will have to report the reason for the counseling with Z71.51 (Drug abuse counseling and surveillance of drug abuser). Since the patient is extensively abusing laxatives, you will have to report this with F55.2 (Abuse of laxatives), in addition to Z71.51.