Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

ICD-10: Watch for Two Kinds of 'Excludes' in ICD-10 Aftercare Codes

New notes clear up blurred exclusion instructions.

While many coding conventions will remain the same as you make the transition from ICD-9 to ICD-10 in 2013, you'll need to be aware of a few crucial differences for accurate reporting. One major change is that ICD-10 has two different types of "excludes" notes. While this might seem like another layer of complication in coding, it will actually clear up one of ICD-9's little quirks.

In ICD-9, an "excludes" note can have two different meanings. In ICD-10, there are two different types of "excludes" notes, each with a distinct meaning.

Currently, some ICD-9 "excludes" notes indicate that you should never report a code for the excluded term in conjunction with the code you have located in the tabular list.

Example: An "excludes" note under V54.1 (Aftercare for healing traumatic fracture) indicates that this is not the correct code category for reporting aftercare following joint replacement surgery.

In ICD-10, this type of "excludes" note is labeled as "Excludes1." For example, ICD-10 code category Z47.- (Orthopedic aftercare) carries the note: "Excludes1: aftercare for healing fracture -- code to fracture with 7th character D."

In other instances, an ICD-9 "excludes" note can mean that you will need to list a second code in addition to the one you are considering if your patient has both conditions.

Example: ICD-9 subcategory V58.4 (Other aftercare following surgery) has an "excludes" note indicating that these codes do not cover attention to artificial openings. So if you were coding for a patient who had suffered a subdural hematoma during an automobile accident and also needed care and teaching for a new gastrostomy, you would list both V58.43 (Aftercare for injury and trauma) and V55.1 (Attention to gastrostomy).

In ICD-10, this type of "excludes" note is labeled as "Excludes 2." For example, category Z48 (Encounter for other postprocedural aftercare) lists an Excludes 2 note that reads "Excludes 2: encounter for attention to artificial openings (Z43.-) encounter for fitting and adjustment of prosthetic and other devices (Z44-Z46)." You would list these codes in addition to the Z48.- code if appropriate.