

## Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

### Reader Questions: Check the Notes When Coding Surgical Complications

Question: I would like to know how to code drop foot, secondary to spinal surgery. Would it be coded as:

- 997.09 (Other nervous system complications)
- 736.79 (Other acquired deformities of ankle and foot; other)
- 956.9 (Injury to unspecified nerve of pelvic girdle and lower limb)

Or should this be coded as

- 907.5 (Late effect of injury to peripheral nerve of pelvic girdle and lower limb)
- 736.79?

Washington Subscriber

Answer: for this patient, you would list:

- M1020a: 997.09 (Other nervous system complications) and
- M1022b: 736.79 (Other acquired deformities of ankle and foot; other).

Category 997.xx has a note to use additional code to identify complication and the complication in this case is the drop foot, which is coded with 736.79. The late effect code, 907.5 is not correct because it only applies to original injuries coded with a 956.x category code. The codes in 956.x are not correct because the injury appears to be to the spinal cord, not to the peripheral nerve.

The correct codes show that there was a complication of surgery that caused the drop foot.