

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Questions: Clear Up Abscess Confusion

Question: If the physician performed an incision and drainage (I&D) for an abscess, but there is still an infection present at the site, what code should I list? When is it appropriate to list a V code? And how can I make sure I'm getting all the case mix points we're due?

-- New York Subscriber

Answer: If the abscess or the infection is still present (for example, the patient is taking antibiotics) you should code the abscess and not a V code for aftercare. If the infection is resolved, for example, the physician did an excision and removed the pocket of infection, then you may code the aftercare code.

Many of the abscess codes are now case mix diagnoses. If you place the aftercare code in M0230 or M0240, then you should list the abscess code in M0246 across from the V code.

Remember that incision and drainage doesn't qualify as a surgical wound for the purposes of answering M0482-M0488.