

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

READER QUESTIONS: Complications Trump V Codes

Question: Our patient had a laceration on his right thigh from a trauma. He had the wound sutured and he was discharged on Keflex due to infection signs and symptoms. While removing the sutures, the physician found the patient had cellulitis on his right leg. He will continue to take the Keflex orally. Skilled nursing will provide needed dressing changes. How should I code this?

-- Maine Subscriber

Answer: Avoid the temptation to list a V58.3x (Attention to dressings and sutures) code when the wound is complicated. Instead, you'll need to code the patient's medical diagnoses: the complicated open wound and cellulitis.

You'll sequence the complicated wound first with 890.1 (Open wound of hip and thigh, complicated), followed by 682.6 (Other cellulitis and abscess; leg, except foot) and the V58.62 (Long term use of antibiotics).