Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Questions: Flesh Out Blood Draw Coding

Question: Which code should we use for blood draws? The nurse does not take the sample to the lab but instead has a machine that gives instant on-the-spot readings.

-- Florida Subscriber

Answer: First, you need to code the diagnosis for which you are observing and assessing by doing all these blood draws.

Code V58.83 (Encounter for therapeutic drug monitoring) is not specifically for venipuncture -- it is for assessment of the effectiveness of a medication through lab data (it doesn't even have to be blood). Follow that code with the code for the medication you are monitoring, such as V58.61 (Long-term [current] use of anticoagulants).

If you are not using the blood to assess the effectiveness of a medication, then do not use V58.83. Remember also that these V codes are reason-for-encounter codes, so drop them to the bottom of the list if the patient has other conditions that may impact the plan of care.