

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

READER QUESTIONS: Get Specific With Fractures

Question: In your Dec. issue, "You Be The Coder," you suggested coding V54.13 for a patient who had an open reduction internal fixation (ORIF). I thought I understood that once a fracture has been repaired, it was no longer considered aftercare for healing fracture.

Wouldn't it be more appropriate to report V54.09 for this patient?

West Virginia Subscriber

Answer: The ORIF repairs the fracture but the fracture is not healed until the ends of the bone grow back together. Code V54.09 (Other aftercare involving internal fixation device) is a non-specific code. Since 2003, we've been able to use more specific codes from the V54.1x (Aftercare for healing traumatic fracture) series to report care of a healing traumatic fracture.