

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

READER QUESTIONS: List An 'Other' Code For Dysarthria

Question: I know that cerebrovascular accident (CVA) late effects fall under the 438 codes. But we recently admitted a patient for therapy, which will include speech therapy, for the late effect of dysarthria.

There is a code, 438.12, for dysphasia but the therapist says this is different from dysarthria. I looked up code 784.5 (Other speech disturbance), which lists both disorders (dysarthria and dysphasia). Would it be acceptable to code 438.12 for the dysarthria late effect?

Ohio Subscriber

Answer: If your speech therapist is differentiating between the two conditions, code dysarthria due to a CVA as 438.19 (Other speech and language deficits as late effect of CVA).

The two conditions have different mechanisms. Dysarthria is a disorder that impacts the physical ability to form words, while dysphasia affects the process through which thoughts and ideas become spoken words.