

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Questions: Use Good Judgment With Long-Term Medication Codes

Question: We often see patients who come home from the hospital with urinary tract infections or pneumonia. We have been coding the infection but have also been using V58.62 (Long-Term [current] use of antibiotics) for these patients. I was recently told that we shouldn't use this code if it is just a short-term use of the antibiotic.

If this is true can you please explain why the word "current" is in the description?

This has also been a problem for people who are referred to us after a surgery and are on an anticoagulant for a short time. Should we be using the V58.61 (Long-Term [current] use of anticoagulants) for these patients?

-- Maryland Subscriber

Answer: There is no definition of long-term because long-term is different for different drugs. If the patient is expected to be on the drug for an extended period -- for example longer than 10 days for antibiotics -- or if the patient is on the drug for prophylactic purposes, then use the long-term code.

When anticoagulants are used for prophylactic purposes after orthopedic surgery, it's appropriate to use V58.61.

Sequence correctly: Do not use the long-term use codes as primary. These codes can be listed as secondary diagnoses only.