

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

YOU BE THE CODER: KEEP CANCER CODES IN CHECK

Question: Our patient has ataxia following surgery to remove a benign neoplasm of the brain. We are providing observation and assessment as well as dressing changes. How should we code for him?

--Texas Subscriber

Answer: If you are providing aftercare for this resolving condition, list V58.42 (Aftercare following surgery for neoplasm) as primary, says **Lisa Selman-Holman, JD, BSN, RN, HCS-D, COS-C**, consultant and principle of Selman-Holman & Associates in Denton, Texas. This V code replaces a Neuro 1 case mix diagnosis code, so you can place the code for the benign neoplasm of the brain --225.0 (Benign neoplasm of brain) -- in M0246 for the case mix points.

Warning: If you don't place 225.0 in M0246, you'll lose the case mix points for the neoplasm as a primary diagnosis, Selman-Holman says.

If the patient still has the benign neoplasm, then you should also list this code in M0240, Selman-Holman says. But if the neoplasm is gone, you shouldn't list it in M0240.

Finally, list the code for the ataxia, 781.3 (Lack of coordination).