Social Risk Coding & Documentation

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Introductions



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Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, learners will be able to...

- 1. Describe opportunities to identify social risk and advance equity using the new E/M coding guidelines
- 2. List specific ways to code social risk using the new coding guidelines
- 3. Identify ways in which social risk coding can help improve care, advance equity, and access revenue



Key questions we'll address today

- What are the new E/M Coding Guidelines and why do they matter for patients' social needs and health equity?
- 2. How can my practice code for social risk using the new coding guidelines?
- 3. What are simple steps my practice can take to use the social risk information we capture with the new coding guidelines to improve care, advance equity, and access revenue?



2021 E/M Coding Guidelines

What are the new E/M Coding Guidelines and why do they matter for patients' social needs and health equity?



Why coding matters

- Medical coding takes information about diagnoses, treatments, procedures, medications and equipment and translates them into alphanumeric codes.
- Coding helps creates a more complete picture of the complexity of a patients' health.
- Coding is key to a practice's financial success.
 - Under value-based programs, coding can also lead to appropriately higher reimbursement to cover the costs of treating patients.



While many clinics are now screening for social needs, they may not be capturing or using that information well

- ICD-10-CM codes Z55-Z65 ("Z codes") identify non-medical factors that may influence a patient's health status
- Any clinician or care team member can document a social need
- Many clinics and hospitals still don't routinely use "Zcodes" to code social needs

USING Z CODES: The Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Data Journey to Better Outcomes

Step 1 Collect **SDOH Data SDOH Data**

Any member of a person's care team can collect SDOH data during any encounter.

- Includes providers, social workers, community health workers, case managers, patient navigators, and nurses.
- Can be collected at intake through health risk assessments. screening tools, person-provider interaction, and individual self-reporting.

Step 2 Document

Data are recorded in a person's paper or electronic health record (EHR).

- · SDOH data may be documented in the problem or diagnosis list. patient or client history, or provider notes.
- · Care teams may collect more detailed SDOH data than current Z codes allow. These data should be retained.
- Efforts are ongoing to close Z code gaps and standardize SDOH data.

Step 3 Map SDOH Data to Z Codes

Assistance is available from the **ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for** Coding and Reporting.¹

- · Coding, billing, and EHR systems help coders assign standardized codes (e.g., Z codes).
- Coders can assign SDOH Z codes based on self-reported data and/or information documented in an individual's health care record by any member of the care team.2

SDOH-related Z codes ranging from Z55-Z65 are the ICD-10-CM encounter reason codes used to document SDOH data (e.g., housing, food insecurity, transportation, etc.).

SDOH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, and age.





Step 4 Use SDOH **Z Code Data**

Data analysis can help improve quality, care coordination, and experience of care.

- · Identify individuals' social risk factors and unmet needs.
- Inform health care and services. follow-up, and discharge planning.
- Trigger referrals to social services that meet individuals' needs.
- · Track referrals between providers and social service organizations.

Step 5 Report SDOH **Z Code Data Findings**

SDOH data can be added to key reports for executive leadership

and Boards of Directors to inform value-based care opportunities.

- Findings can be shared with social service organizations, providers, health plans, and consumer/patient advisory boards to identify unmet needs.
- A Disparities Impact Statement can be used to identify opportunities for advancing health equity.



For Questions: Contact the CMS Health Equity Technical Assistance Program

cms.gov/medicare/icd-10/2021-icd-10-cm



What's new: The 2021 E/M Coding Guidelines

- The AMA and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) deployed landmark E/M office visit code changes on Jan. 1, 2021
 - This is the first overhaul of evaluation and management (E/M) office visit documentation and coding in almost 30 years.
- The goals of the new E/M Coding Guidelines are:
 - Decrease documentation burden and note bloat
 - Make code level selection more intuitive
 - To decrease the need for audits, through the addition and expansion of key definitions
 - Retain current code distribution
- **Key takeaway:** Code level should be based on clinician work in managing the patient's problem(s) with focus on decision making, not simply on volume of tests/treatments



Coding based on time & medical decision making

- Clinicians and coders now have two choices to select from when deciding E/M visit levels
 - By determining the complexity of Medical Decision-Making (MDM)
 - Based on Total time on the date of the encounter (not just time spent in the encounter)
- Understanding how to appropriately document a visit to code and bill based on the complexity
 of your MDM can result in a higher level of compensation
 - There are four levels of complexity straightforward, low, moderate, high each correlated with different E/M visit levels
- When determining level of complexity, clinicians and coders must consider:
 - Problem: Number & complexity of problems addressed at encounter
 - <u>Data</u>: Amount and/or complexity of data reviewed and analyzed
 - Management Risk*: Risk of complications or morbidity/mortality of patient management.
 - *Capturing social needs/risk data is important here. Is diagnosis or treatment limited by an identified social risk?



Why does this matter for social needs & equity?

- The 2021 E/M coding guidelines create opportunities to advance health equity by:
 - Improving the capture and consideration of **patient social risk data**, especially related to medical decision-making.
 - Paving the way for incentives to better support health-social care integration & practicelevel equity work related to social needs.
- How?
 - The E/M coding guidelines allow providers to use ICD-10-CM Z55-Z65 SDoH codes as a reason for "moderate risk" under Medical Decision Making (MDM) when coding for office or other outpatient services.
- But...
 - If clinicians and coders implement these guidelines without an un explicit focus on health equity, they may either miss opportunities to reduce health inequities, including racial health inequities or, even worse, may inadvertently exacerbate them.



Capturing Social Risk Information

How can my practice code for social risk using the new coding guidelines?



Why collect social risk/ social need data?

- To better identify the complexity of a patient's health status
- To support clinicians and care teams to adjust patient care and improve quality of care
- To better identify patterns of health inequities, including racial health inequities
- To inform population health management approaches to address social and structural drivers of health equity
- To support preparation for and capacity to perform in VBP models that ask for social risk data



1. Define your social need screening strategy



Universal



Selective



Indicated

Delivered to broad populations without consideration of individual differences in risk for specific needs

Aligned with primary prevention strategies

Example: Screen all children once a year for unmet social needs

Delivered to target subgroups of individuals identified on the basis of their membership in a group that has an elevated risk for developing specific needs/issues

Aligned with secondary prevention strategies

Example: Screen children from 3 local census tracts with highest social vulnerability for unmet social needs at least twice a year

Tailored design and interventions to address specific risk conditions that are already appearing

Aligned with tertiary prevention strategies

Example: Screen adolescents with poor grades, anxiety or repeat ER visits for unmet social needs at least once every 3 months



2. Decide where to start: Screen for 1-2 social needs or all?

Example of a FQHC with a social needs screening currently focused on: food insecurity



Universal



Selective



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Aligned with primary prevention strategies

Example: Screen all children once a year for **food insecurity**

Delivered to target subgroups of individuals identified on the basis of their membership in a group that has an elevated risk for developing specific needs/issues

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Tailored design and interventions to address specific risk conditions that are already appearing

Aligned with tertiary prevention strategies

Example: Screen adolescents with poor grades, anxiety or repeat ER visits for **food insecurity** at least once every 3 months



3. Identify opportunities to collect social needs data

TABLE 5.2. Summary of PRAPARE Workflow Models and Response				
wно	WHERE	WHEN	ном	
NON-CLINICAL STAFF (Patient Advocates, Patient Navigators, Community Health Workers, etc.)	In patient advocate's office	After clinical visit	Administered PRAPARE and responded to needs identified. Discussed needs with provider and care team.	
NON-CLINICAL STAFF (outreach and enrollment staff, eligibility assistance staff, etc.)	In waiting room	Before provider visit	Administered PRAPARE with patients who would be waiting 30+ minutes for provider	
CLINICAL STAFF (nurses, medical assistants, etc.)	In exam room	Before provider enters exam room	Administered PRAPARE after vitals and reason for visit. Provider reviews data to inform treatment plan	
CARE	In care coordinator's office	When completing Health Risk Assessments	Administered PRAPARE in conjunction with Health Risk Assessments to address similar needs in real time	

TABLE 5.2. Summary of PRAPARE Workflow Models and Response			
wно	WHERE	WHEN	ном
CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT TEAM	In exam room	During the clinical visit	Administered PRAPARE with patients and discussed needs as a team to develop appropriate response and care management plan
INTERPRETERS	In waiting room or exam room	Before the clinical visit	Administered PRAPARE with patients requiring language assistance.
ANY STAFF (from front desk staff to providers)	"No Wrong Door" approach	"No Wrong Door" approach	"No Wrong Door" approach where any staff can ask PRAPARE questions at any time to paint fuller picture of patient
SELF-ASSESSMENT	In waiting room or at home	Before the clinical visit	Patient self-assesses using paper version of PRAPARE or Ipads, kiosks, tablets, email, patient portal, etc.



Tools to create your social need workflows

HealthBegins Workflow Template	Care Team Member	Role/ Process	Tools/ Data Source	Metric
Workflow improvement oversight				
Pre-visit				
Screen				
<u>Triage</u>				
<u>Exam</u>				
Chart/Code				
<u>Bill</u>				
Refer				
Post-visit				



HealthBegins Workflow Template (e.g. food insecurity)	Care Team Member	Role/ Process	Tools/ Data Source	Metric
Responsibility for workflow improvement	Upstream QI committee	Project Team oversees & tracks PDSAs	Upstream QI Project Charter	# QI team participation # PDSAs
<u>Pre-visit</u>	Patient	Patients receive automated info on food resources	Automated SMS / phone calls	# Message open rate
Screen	Medical Assistant	Ask during vitals of target population	Hunger Vital Sign	% screened
<u>Triage</u>	Medical Assistant	Flag in EMR	Triage Protocol	% positive % flagged
<u>Exam</u>	PCP	Review / Adjust care plan if food insecure	EMR autopopulates Problem List	% plans updated
Chart/Code	PCP, Medical Assistant, Coder	Scribe/ standing order to refer to SW and/or CBO Code social need	EMR ICD-10 z codes 2021 E/M coding	% referrals % coded correctly
<u>Bill</u>	Billing staff	Submit for reimbursement as needed	2021 E/M coding	% visits billed
<u>Refer</u>	Social Worker, CHW, and/or RN	Assess need (SW or CHW) Food bank referral	Online community resource database	% referred
Post-visit	Social Worker, CHW, and/or RN	Phone/SMS or in-person check-in Pop health management	EMR SMS/ Phone calls	% decrease in food insecurity & utilization

Flow of Food Insecurity Coding in an Office Visit

EXISTING Opportunities

LOINC Codes

SCREEN

Hunger Vital Sign 88121-9

CPT Codes 96160 / 96161

SCREENING QUESTIONS

- 1) "Within the past 12 months we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more." 88122-7
- 2) "Within the past 12 months the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more." 88123-5

ANSWERS TO ONE OR BOTH QUESTIONS

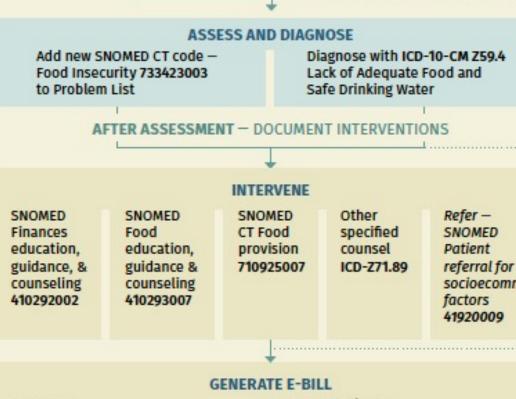
"Often True" LA28397-0

"Sometimes True" LA6729-3

AT RISK for food insecurity LA19952-3

"Don't Know"/Refused "Never True" LA15775-2 LA28398-8

> NOT AT RISK LA19983-8 Rescreen at next Interval



ICD-10-CM

Z59.4 Lack of adequate food and safe drinking water Z71.89 Other specified counselling CPT 96161/96160 (if validated, standardized screen)

+ Applicable additional E/M code

Refer -

SNOMED

41920009

socioecomnic

Patient

DeSilvey, S., Ashbrook, A., Sheward, R., Hartline-Grafton, H., Ettinger de Cuba, S., & Gottlieb, L. (2018). An Overview of Food Insecurity Coding in Health Care Settings: Existing and Emerging Opportunities. Boston, MA: Hunger Vital Sign™ National Community of Practice. Available at: http://childrenshealthwatch.org/foodinsecuritycoding/



4. Document social needs with the Z codes

Z55 - Problems related to education and literacy

 Illiteracy/low-level, schooling availability, failing school, underachievement, discord with teachers

Z56 - Problems related to employment and unemployment

 Changing of job, losing job, no job, stressful work schedule, discord with boss/coworkers, bad working conditions

Z57 - Occupational exposure to risk factors

 Noise, radiation, dust, other air contaminants, tobacco, toxic agents in farming, extreme temperatures, vibration, others

Z59 - Problems related to housing and economic circumstances

 Homeless, inadequate housing, discord with neighbors/landlord, problems with residential living, lack of adequate food/safe drinking water, poverty, low income, insufficient social insurance/welfare support

Z60 - Problems related to social environment

 Adjustment to life-cycle transitions, living alone, cultural differences, social exclusion and rejection, discrimination/persecution

Z62 - Problems related to upbringing

 Inadequate parental supervision/control, parental overprotection, upbringing away from parents, child in custody, institutional upbringing (orphan or group home), hostility towards child, inappropriate/excessive parental pressure, child abuse including history of (physical and/or sexual), neglect, forced labor, child-parent conflict

Z63 - Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances

 Spousal conflict, in-law conflict, absence of family member (death, divorce, deployment), dependent relative needing care, family alcoholism/drug addiction, isolated family

Z64 - Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances

Unwanted pregnancy, multiparity, discord with counselors

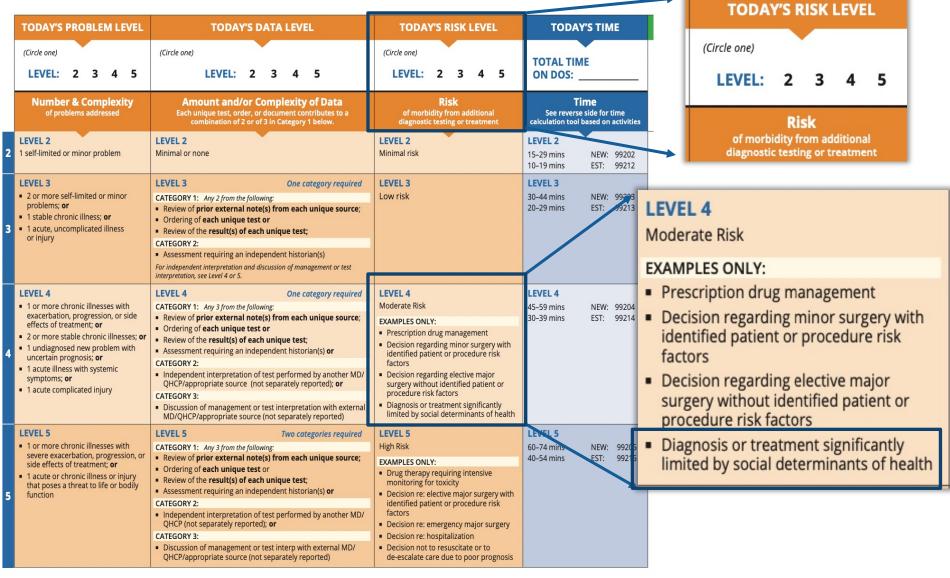
Z65 - Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances

Civil/criminal convictions, incarceration, problems



5. Document when social needs impact management risk using the new coding guidelines

The new coding guidelines state that "Diagnosis or treatment significantly limited by social determinants of health" may be a factor in determining "Moderate risk of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing and treatment."





PCC. 2021 E/M Coding Tool. https://learn.pcc.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021EMCoding.pdf

Equity & sustainability

What steps can we take to use the social risk data to improve care, advance equity, and access revenue?



1. Involve patients and community members

- How is your practice involving patients and other members who belong to historically marginalized communities in your health equity efforts?
- What patterns of inequity do they perceive when it comes to healthcare access, quality or outcomes?
- What social and structural drivers do they identify as the root causes for these inequities?
- How is your practice compensating them for their insights and contribution?



2. Identify patterns of health inequity

- How can you improve collection and documentation of
 - patient race, ethnicity, and primary language (REAL) data?
 - patient sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data?
 - Patient income and geographic (address) data?
- How can you improve your capacity to analyze patient data to identify inequities in healthcare access, quality of care, and outcomes?
 - **Example**: With clinic data and local public health data, Clinic X identifies four zip codes with the highest rates of asthma diagnosis and associated ED utilization among children and teens.
 - With support from an academic partner, they identify inequities in health status, no-show rates, and ED utilization between Black and Latinx children with asthma compared to white counterparts who live in the same zip codes



3. Use social risk data to provide & document better care

- How well does your care team use social risk data to provide more empathic care and adjust patients care plans?
- Example:
 - A parent brings her asthmatic child to Clinic X for a new visit. In the waiting room, she uses an iPad-based screening tool to disclose housing instability and problems, including mold & water leaks.
 - During the visit, a FNP uses empathic inquiry to discuss this social risk with the family, advises on ways to minimize asthma triggers, adjusts treatment based on this information, and recommends a referral to a local CBO that specializes in housing remediation.
 - The coder documents this visit as Level 4- 99204, based in part on documentation of the social risk (Z code 59.1) and its impact on diagnosis and treatment of the patients' medical problems.



4. Use social risk data to better understand and address patterns of inequity

- To what extent are social risk data associated with the patterns of inequity you've identified?
- How are you working with community partners to address the social and structural drivers of health equity impacting your patients?
- Example:
 - Clinic X securely shares deidentified data with their public health agency. They identify that the housing problems that they've documented are associated with the racial inequities in asthma outcomes identified among their local patients.
 - A local CBO and legal aid organization use this data to increase enforcement of housing codes with landlords who own the buildings where many of Clinic X's impacted patients reside.



5. Use social risk data to do better under VBP

- To what extent is your practice involved in value-based payment (VBP) or alternative payment models (APM)?
 - Do the VBP or APM models provide incentives for collecting and acting on social risk data?

Example:

- As part of a broader network, Clinic X has an APM contract with a Medicaid managed care plan to care for a defined set of complex patients. If Clinic X meets specific quality of care benchmarks, including social need screening and referral benchmarks, it can receive shared savings from the plan.
- Clinic X uses upfront payment and projected revenue from shared savings to expand and sustain housing and other social care services for patients. This revenue also helps offset the costs of health & social care for other patients, like asthmatic children.



Recap

We hope that you are now able to...

- Describe opportunities to identify social risk and advance equity using the new E/M coding guidelines
- List specific ways to code social risk using the new coding guidelines
- Identify ways in which social risk coding can help improve care, advance equity, and access revenue





Additional Resources



American Hospital Association's info sheet on ICD-10-CM Coding for SDOH (2019)



Table 1 ICD-10-CM Code Categories

ICD-10-CM Code Category	Problems/Risk Factors Included in Category
Z55 – Problems related to education and literacy	Illiteracy, schooling unavailable, underachievement in a school, educational maladjustment and discord with teachers and classmates.
Z56 – Problems related to employment and unemployment	Unemployment, change of job, threat of job loss, stressful work schedule, discord with boss and workmates, uncongenial work environment, sexual harassment on the job, and military deployment status.
Z57 – Occupational exposure to risk factors	Occupational exposure to noise, radiation, dust, environmental tobacco smoke, toxic agents in agriculture, toxic agents in other industries, extreme temperature and vibration.
Z59 – Problems related to housing and economic circumstances	Homelessness, inadequate housing, discord with neighbors, lodgers and landlord, problems related to living in residential institutions, lack of adequate food and safe drinking water, extreme poverty, low income, insufficient social insurance and welfare support.
Z60 – Problems related to social environment	Adjustment to life-cycle transitions, living alone, acculturation difficulty, social exclusion and rejection, target of adverse discrimination and persecution.
Z62 – Problems related to upbringing	Inadequate parental supervision and control, parental overprotection, upbringing away from parents, child in welfare custody, institutional upbringing, hostility towards and scapegoating of child, inappropriate excessive parental pressure, personal history of abuse in childhood, personal history of neglect in childhood, Z62.819 Personal history of unspecified abuse in childhood, Parent-child conflict, and sibling rivalry.
Z63 – Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances	Absence of family member, disappearance and death of family member, disruption of family by separation and divorce, dependent relative needing care at home, stressful life events affecting family and household, stress on family due to return of family member from military deployment, alcoholism and drug addiction in family.
Z64 – Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances	Unwanted pregnancy, multiparity, and discord with counselors.
Z65 – Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances	Conviction in civil and criminal proceedings without imprisonment, imprisonment and other incarceration, release from prison, other legal circumstances, victim of crime and terrorism, and exposure to disaster, war and other hostilities.



Resources to improve coding & billing

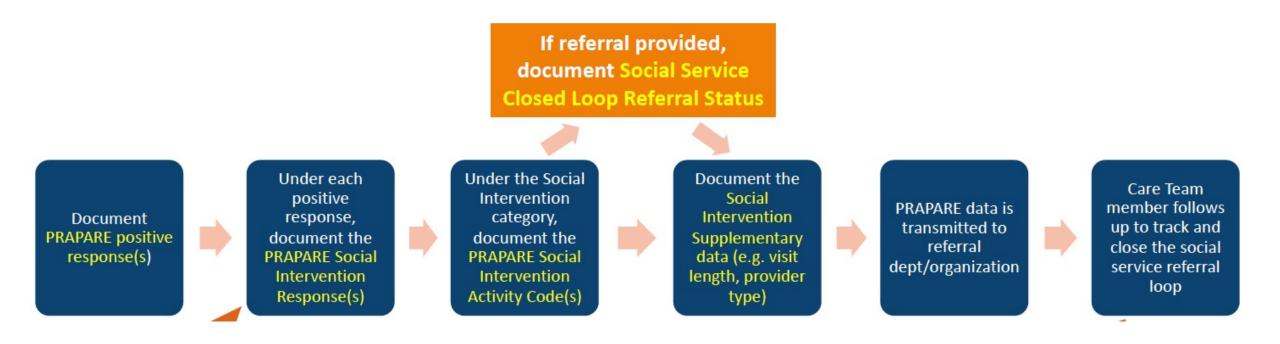
- For clinics that use the PRAPARE screening tool, use their Toolkit
 - Code for social needs:
 - The <u>PRAPARE data documentation crosswalk</u> includes coding specifications and instructions for all PRAPARE measures and maps PRAPARE data to existing codes (such as ICD-10, LOINC, and SNOMED codes)
 - Code for social intervention responses based on need

Code	Social Intervention Response
SI-RE	Racial/Ethnic Support Services
SI-FW	Farmworker Support Services
SI-VN	Veteran Support Services
SI-IN	Interpretation Services
SI-HS	Housing Support Services
SI-FC	Financial Counseling/Eligibility Assistance
SI-ED	Education Support Services
SI-EM	Employment Support Services
SI-FD	Food Support Services
SI-UT	Utilities Support Services
SI-CC	Child Care Support Services
SI-MH	Medicine or Health Care Support Services

Code	Social Intervention Response
SI-CL	Clothing Support Services
SI-PH	Phone Support Services
SI-OM	Other Material Security Support Services
SI-MT	Medical Transportation Services
SI-NMT	Non-Medical Transportation Services
SI-SI	Social Integration Support Services
SI-ST	Mental Health Support Services
SI-IN	Incarceration Support Services
SI-RF	Refugee Support Services
SI-ST	Safety Support Services
SI-DV	Domestic Violence Support Services



PRAPARE Social Intervention Documentation Workflow





Additional Resources

Assessing and Addressing Social Risk: https://www.episcopalhealth.org/wp- content/uploads/2020/01/PRAPARE in Texas Final Report Designed 4 12 18.pdf

Food Insecurity Screening Workflow Compliance and Measuring Success https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/Food-Insecurity-Screening-Workflow-Compliance-and-Measuring-Success.pdf

An Overview of Coding

https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/An-Overview-of-Coding 2.15.18 final.pdf

FRAC- Screen and Intervene: A Toolkit for Pediatricians to Address Food Insecurity https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/FRAC_AAP_Toolkit_2021.pdf

CMS Infographic on using SDOH Z codes: https://www.cms.gov/files/document/zcodes-infographic.pdf

Flow of Food Insecurity Coding in an Office Visit Flowchart on page 6: https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/An-Overview-of-Coding 2.15.18 final.pdf

2021 E/M Coding Guidelines https://learn.pcc.com/help/chart-code-and-bill-for-em-office-visits/#Select_a_Code_Based_on_Medical_Decision_Making

American Hospital Association's info sheet on ICD-10-CM Coding for SDOH (2019) with suggested resources: https://www.aha.org/system/files/2018-04/value-initiative-icd-10-code-social-determinants-of-health.pdf

2019 Social Determinants of Health ICD-10 Codes: https://www.uhcprovider.com/en/resource-library/news/2019-net-bulletin-featuredarticles/0619-social-determinants-health.html

