**From the Desk of Shawn Bromley**

Director of Contracting and Operations , Northeast PHO

In an effort to keep all NEPHO providers up to date with COVID-19 news we are providing detail to the new ICD-10 CM codes that have been released by the CDC. These new codes will support tracking of the virus and support medical management of virus containment. Important links are provided to keep all providers current with COVID-19 updates. In addition I have attached a detailed summary of current Telehealth coding and billing information to help support reimbursement for Telehealth services.

Please reach out to me directly with questions regarding these new coding and billing updates - all providers need to check in with their system vendors and billing/coding vendors to ensure updates have been made to systems and billing and coding is current.

Thank you, Shawn

**Announcement:**

The CDC released the official diagnosis coding guidance for encounters and deaths related to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), effective February 20, 2020.

COVID-19 infections cause a range of illness severity, from no symptoms to severe illness and potentially death. Coronavirus symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may appear between two and 14 days after exposure.

This guidance is intended to be used in conjunction with current ICD-10-CM classifications and will be updated to reflect new clinical information as it becomes available. The codes provided are intended to give information on the coding of encounters related to COVID-19; other codes for conditions unrelated to coronavirus might be required to fully code scenarios in accordance with ICD-10-CM *Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting*.

For confirmed cases of pneumonia due to COVID-19, use codes:

* J12.89, Other viral pneumonia, and
* B97.29, Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

For confirmed cases of acute bronchitis due to COVID-19, use codes:

* J20.8, Acute bronchitis due to other specified organisms, and
* B97.29, Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

For bronchitis not otherwise specified (NOS) due to COVID-19, use codes:

* J40, Bronchitis, not specified as acute or chronic, along with code
* B97.29, other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

For lower respiratory infections, NOS, or an acute respiratory infection, NOS, with associated documented COVID-19, assign codes:

* J22, Unspecified acute lower respiratory infection, with code
* B97.29, Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

For respiratory infections, NOS, with associated documented COVID-19, use codes:

* J98.8, Other specified respiratory disorders, with
* B97.29, Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

For confirmed acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) due to COVID-19, assign codes:

* J80, Acute respiratory distress syndrome, and
* B97.29, Other coronavirus as the cause of diseases classified elsewhere

To code a concern about COVID-19 exposure that was ruled out after evaluation, use code:

* Z03.818, Encounter for observation for suspected exposure to other biological agents ruled out

To code actual COVID-19 exposure with a confirmed coronavirus case, assign code:

* Z20.828, Contact with and (suspected) exposure to other viral communicable diseases

For patients presenting with symptoms where a definitive coronavirus diagnosis is not established, assign the appropriate codes for each presenting symptom, such as:

* R05, Cough
* R06.02, Shortness of breath
* R50.9, Fever, unspecified

Diagnosis code B34.2, Coronavirus infection, unspecified, would **not** generally be appropriate for COVID-19 because confirmed cases have universally been respiratory in nature, so the site would not be unspecified.

According to the new guidelines, do not assign code B97.29 if the provider documents “suspected,” “possible,” or “probable” COVID-19. Instead, assign codes explaining the reason for the encounter (such as fever, or Z20.828).

<https://journal.ahima.org/new-icd-10-cm-code-for-covid-19-becomes-effective-october-1/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/ICD-10-CM-Official-Coding-Gudance-Interim-Advice-coronavirus-feb-20-2020.pdf>

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