ICD-10 Z-Codes for Social Determinants of Health

June 2017

As healthcare moves toward value-based care and payment, health centers will increasingly have business-, as well as mission-, related reasons for collecting and acting on social determinants of health (SDH).

Standardized medical vocabulary like ICD-10 z-codes or LOINC could offer a way to aggregate and analyze SDH data across health centers, providers, and payers.

However, domains of importance to health centers don't all have a one-to-one fit with existing codes. Health center leaders and other stakeholders are currently in the process of building consensus around how to reform existing standardized coding systems to be able to capture and analyze SDH data.

Using a standardized approach to SDH data is important for:

▶ Meeting the needs of health center patients by offering the right services and referrals

▶ Ensuring panels are staffed and sized appropriately given the underlying medical and social complexity of the population

▶ Identifying population health-related trends that may be tackled through non-traditional, system-wide relationships beyond the clinic

▶ Supporting policy/payment reforms that include appropriate adjustments for SDH

▶ Enabling system-wide research and understanding what works

In the meantime, some health centers have been using the National Association of Community Health Center (NACHC) Protocol for Responding to and Assessing Patients' Assets, Risks, and Experiences (PRAPARE) tool to document SDH data. Many, but not all, EHRs are automatically documenting Z-codes with the PRAPARE template. Even without an EHR template, health centers may choose to use several ICD-10 z-codes as an interim solution for coding some SDH. For example, health centers have successfully used *Z59.0 Homelessness*, and the National Healthcare for the Homeless Council has released guidance on its use.

This tool outlines existing ICD-10 z-codes that are a close match to questions in NACHC's PRAPARE tool. While z-codes do not yet exist for all responses to PRAPARE domains and specific responses, systematically coding using a standardized dataset for domains that do have close matches will allow health centers to use such structured data for practice change and patient care and to build the beginning of a robust SDH dataset across health center populations for policy and evaluation.

ICD-10 Z-Codes for Social Determinants of Health

Chapter 21 of the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD 10) covers factors influencing health status and contact with health services. This chapter is referred to as the "z-codes" Z00-99. For SDH coding, *Z55-65 Persons with potential health hazards related to socioeconomic and psychosocial circumstances* is the most relevant section.

PRAPARE Question	PRAPARE Response	ICD-10 z-code
What is your housing situation today?	I have housing	
	I do not have housing (staying with others, in a hotel, on the street, in a shelter)	**Z59.0 Homelessness**
What is the highest level of school that you have finished?	Less than high school degree	**Z55.3 Underachievement in school**
	High school diploma or GED	
	More than high school	
What is your current work situation?	Unemployed and seeking work	**Z56.0 Unemployment, unspecified**
	Part-time work	
	Full-time work	
	Otherwise unemployed but not seeking work	
Percent of federal poverty level (FPL)

(PRAPARE automatically calculates household size and income questions) | 100% or below | **Z59.5 Extreme poverty** |
	101-150%	**Z59.6 Low-income**
	151-200%	**Z59.6 Low-income**
	Over 200%	
	Unknown	
In the past year, have you or any family members you live with been unable to get any of the following when it was really needed? (Check all that apply.)	Food	**Z59.4 Lack of adequate food**
	Clothing	
	Utilities	
	Childcare	
	Medicine or any health care	
	Phone	
	Other	