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Social determinants of health (SDOH)

Social determinants of health (SDOH) such as housing, food security and transportation can have an immense impact on the physical and mental health of patients. Capturing SDOH data can help to improve patient outcomes, which may assist patients with barriers related to housing and transportation, social support, health literacy, nutritional support and financial assistance.

By addressing these determinants, providers can identify patients who may need assistance with additional resources potentially available through their health plan and/or local community. It is vital that these determinants are accurately documented and coded, when applicable, to assist in identifying patients who may qualify for needed resources.

Please note that SDOH codes are for supplemental reporting purposes and should not be used as primary diagnosis codes. Code assignment may reflect self-reported information by the patient or based on documentation from other clinicians involved in the patient's care, such as social workers, community health workers, case managers or nurses; however, this information must be incorporated into the record by the managing provider. Please consult the ICD-10-CM code book for additional applicable codes.

The following table represents groupings of most common SDOH situations encountered and is not a complete listing.

Problems related to education and literacy	
Example question: Do you experience communication barriers?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z55.0	Illiteracy and low-level literacy
Z55.1	Schooling unavailable and unattainable
Z55.2	Failed school examinations
Z55.3	Underachievement in school
Z55.4	Educational maladjustment and discord with teachers and classmates
Z55.5	Less than a high school diploma
Z55.6	Problems related to health literacy (difficulty understanding health related information, difficulty understanding medication instructions, problem completing medical forms)
Z55.8	Other problems related to education and literacy
Z55.9	Problems related to education and literacy, unspecified

Problems related to employment and unemployment	
Example question: Are you having trouble at work or difficulty finding or keeping a job?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z56.0	Unemployment, unspecified
Z56.1	Change of job
Z56.2	Threat of job loss
Z56.3	Stressful work schedule
Z56.4	Discord with boss and workmates
Z56.5	Uncongenial work environment (difficult conditions at work)
Z56.6	Other physical and mental strain related to work
Z56.81	Sexual harassment on the job
Z56.82	Military deployment status
Z56.89	Other problems related to employment
Z56.9	Unspecified problems related to employment

Problems related to occupational exposure to risk factors	
Example question: Does your occupation expose you to loud noises or air contaminants?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z57.0	Occupational exposure to noise
Z57.1	Occupational exposure to radiation
Z57.2	Occupational exposure to dust
Z57.31	Occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke • Excludes exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22)
Z57.39	Occupational exposure to other air contaminants
Z57.4	Occupational exposure to toxic agents in agriculture
Z57.5	Occupational exposure to toxic agents in other industries
Z57.6	Occupational exposure to extreme temperature
Z57.7	Occupational exposure to vibration
Z57.8	Occupational exposure to other risk factors
Z57.9	Occupational exposure to unspecified risk factor

Problems related to physical environment	
Example question: Do you have any issues related to your utilities in your current location?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z58.6	Inadequate drinking-water supply (lack of safe drinking water)
Z58.81	Basic services unavailable in physical environment (unable to obtain internet or telephone services, due to unavailability in geographic area)
Z58.89	Other problem related to physical environment

Problems related to housing and economic circumstances	
Example questions: Describe your current living and financial situation. Do you have transportation to attend appointments?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z59.00	Homelessness unspecified
Z59.01	Shelter homelessness (doubled up, living in shelter such as: motel, scattered site housing, temporary or transitional living situation)
Z59.02	Unsheltered homelessness (residing in place not meant for human habitation such as: abandoned buildings, cars, parks or sidewalks)
Z59.10	Inadequate housing, unspecified
Z59.11	Inadequate housing environmental temperature (lack of air conditioning, lack of heating)
Z59.12	Inadequate housing utilities (lack of electricity, gas, oil or water services)
Z59.19	Other inadequate housing (pest infestation, restriction of space, technical defects in home preventing adequate care, unsatisfactory surroundings)
Z59.2	Discord with neighbors, lodgers and landlord
Z59.3	Problems related to living in residential institution
Z59.41	Food insecurity
Z59.48	Other specified lack of adequate food
Z59.5	Extreme poverty
Z59.6	Low income
Z59.7	Insufficient social insurance and welfare support
Z59.811	Housing instability, housed, with risk of homelessness
Z59.812	Housing instability, housed, homelessness in past 12 months
Z59.819	Housing instability, housed unspecified
Z59.82	Transportation insecurity (excessive transportation time, inaccessible transportation, inadequate transportation, lack of transportation, unaffordable transportation, unreliable transportation, unsafe transportation)
Z59.86	Financial insecurity (bankruptcy, burdensome debt, economic strain, financial strain, money problems, running out of money, unable to make ends meet)
Z59.87	Material hardship due to limited financial resources, not elsewhere classified (unable to obtain adequate childcare due to limited financial resources, unable to obtain adequate utilities due to limited financial resources
Z59.89	Other problem related to housing and economic circumstances (foreclosure on loan, isolated dwelling, problems with creditors)
Z59.9	Problem related to housing and economic circumstances, unspecified

Problems related to social environment	
Example questions: Do you have family and/or community support with day-to day activities such as preparing meals, shopping, bathing, managing finances, etc.? Do you feel lonely or isolated?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z60.0	Problems of adjustment to life-cycle transitions (empty nest syndrome, phase of life problem, problem with adjustment to retirement)
Z60.2	Problems related to living alone
Z60.3	Acculturation difficulty (problem with migration, problem with social transplantation)
Z60.4	Social exclusion and rejection (social isolation)
Z60.5	Target of (perceived) adverse discrimination and persecution
Z60.8	Other problems related to social environment (inadequate social support, lack of emotional support)
Z60.9	Problem related to social environment, unspecified

Problems related to upbringing	
Example questions: Describe the child's custody status. Do you have a personal history of childhood abuse?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z62.0	Inadequate parental supervision and control
Z62.1	Parental overprotection
Z62.21	Child in welfare custody
Z62.22	Institutional upbringing (child living in group home or orphanage) • Code also, if applicable, child in welfare custody (Z62.21)
Z62.23 ●	Child in custody of non-parental relative (child in care of non-parental family member, child in custody of grandparent, guardianship by non-parental relative) • Code also, if applicable, child in welfare custody (Z62.21)
Z62.24 ●	Child in custody non-relative guardian • Code also, if applicable, child in welfare custody (Z62.21)
Z62.29	Other upbringing away from parents
Z62.3	Hostility towards and scapegoating of child
Z62.6	Inappropriate (excessive) parental pressure
Z62.810	Personal history of physical and sexual abuse in childhood • Excludes current child physical abuse (T74.12, T76.12), current child sexual abuse (T74.22, T76.22)
Z62.811	Personal history of psychological abuse in childhood • Excludes current child psychological abuse (T74.32, T76.32)
Z62.812	Personal history of neglect in childhood • Excludes current child neglect (T74.02, T76.02)
Z62.813	Personal history of forced labor or sexual exploitation in childhood
Z62.814 ●	Personal history of child financial abuse • Excludes current child financial abuse (T74.A2)
Z62.815 ●	Personal history of intimate partner abuse in childhood • Excludes adult and child abuse, neglect and other maltreatment (T74.-)
Z62.819	Personal history of unspecified abuse in childhood
Z62.82-	Parent-child conflict • (0) biological child, (1) adopted child, (2) foster child, (3) ● step child
Z62.83-	Non-parental relative or guardian-child conflict • (1) ● non-parental relative-child conflict (2) ● non-relative guardian-child conflict, (3) ● group home staff-child conflict
Z62.890	Parent-child estrangement NEC
Z62.891	Sibling rivalry
Z62.892	Runaway (from current living environment)
Z62.898	Other specified problems related to upbringing
Z62.9	Problem related to upbringing, unspecified

For Z62.8- Code also, if applicable: absence of family member (Z63.3-), disappearance and death of family member (Z62.3-), disruption of family by separation and divorce (Z63.5), other specified problems related to primary support group (Z63.8), other stressful life events affecting family and household (Z63.7-).

Codes marked with a ● directly after them represent new additions to the FY 2024 ICD-10-CM code classification.

Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances	
Example questions: Do you feel safe at home? Do you feel regularly under stress at home?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z63.0	Problems in relationship with spouse or partner
Z63.1	Problems in relationship with in-laws
Z63.31	Absence of family member due to military deployment
Z63.32	Other absence of family member
Z63.4	Disappearance and death of family member (bereavement)
Z63.5	Disruption of family by separation and divorce
Z63.6	Dependent relative needing care at home
Z63.71	Stress on family due to return of family member from military deployment
Z63.72	Alcoholism and drug addiction in family
Z63.79	Other stressful life events affecting family and household
Z63.8	Other specified problems related to primary support group
Z63.9	Problem related to primary support group (relationship disorder)

Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z64.0	Problems related to unwanted pregnancy
Z64.1	Problems related to multiparity
Z64.4	Discord with counselors (discord with probation officer, discord with social worker)

Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances	
Example question: Are you experiencing any legal issues?	
Document and code if applicable:	
Z65.0	Conviction in civil and criminal proceedings with imprisonment
Z65.1	Imprisonment and other incarceration
Z65.2	Problems related to other legal circumstances (arrest, child custody or support proceedings, litigation, prosecution)
Z65.4	Victim of crime and terrorism
Z65.5	Exposure to disaster, war and other hostilities

Helpful resources

- Findhelp.org: Identifies local community programs based on specific needs such as food assistance and other free or reduced-cost programs based on ZIP code
- Eldercare.acl.gov: Website hosted by the U.S. Administration on Aging that connects older adults and their families to local services by entering their ZIP code
- Prapare.org: The National Association of Community Health Centers provides an assessment tool for responding to and assessing patients' assets, risks and experiences in an effort to better understand and act on their patients' social determinants of health
- Healthy People 2030: Contains a graphic that shows ways to improve health and well-being through your work

Steps to take for successful capture of social determinants of health		
Educate and plan	Review and identify	Report and share
• Educate physicians, non-physician health care providers and coding professionals on the need to screen, document and code data on patients' social needs. • Develop a plan with your organization to collect SDOH data.	• Use a screening tool to collect SDOH. • Document SDOH data in the EMR. • Review medical records to identify the ICD-10-CM codes in categories Z55-Z65.	• Follow ICD-10-CM and AHA Coding Clinic guidelines for reporting SDOH. • Assign all relevant Z codes to support SDOH data and quality improvement initiatives. • Share data with appropriate agencies to identify needs.

The following references were used in the creation of this document at time of publication:

- Optum360. *ICD-10-CM: Professional for Physicians 2024*. Salt Lake City, UT: Optum360; 2023.
- American Medical Association. *Current Procedural Terminology Professional 2024*. Chicago, IL: AMA; 2023.

1. National Association of Community Health Centers. Accessed November 15, 2023.
2. CMS & AHCM screening tool example. Accessed November 15, 2023.

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The Department of Health & Human Services Hierarchical Condition Category (HHS-HCC) model applies to the health exchange risk adjustment program under the Affordable Care Act. This model differs significantly from the CMS-HCC model, which applies to the Medicare Advantage risk adjustment program. For more information, please visit: cms.gov/marketplace/health-plans-issuers/premium-stabilization-programs.

For Medicaid Managed Care, risk adjustment standards, if any are applicable, are established by each state Medicaid agency and such standards often vary from state to state.

This tool is to be used for easy reference; however, the current ICD-10-CM code classification and the Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting are the authoritative references for accurate and complete coding. The information presented herein is for general informational purposes only. Neither Optum nor its affiliates warrant or represent that the information contained herein is complete, accurate or free from defects. Specific documentation is reflective of the "thought process" of the provider when treating patients. All conditions affecting the care, treatment or management of the patient should be documented with their status and treatment plan and coded to the highest level of specificity. Enhanced precision and accuracy in the codes selected is the ultimate goal. This presentation supplies general information regarding HEDIS and the Five-Star Quality Rating System, but NCQA administers HEDIS and CMS administers the Five-Star Quality Rating System, and you should consult the NCQA and CMS websites for further information. Lastly, on March 31, 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that 2023 dates of service for the 2024 payment year model are based on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Announcement. Announcement of Calendar Year (CY) 2024 Medicare Advantage (MA) Capitation Rates and Part C and Part D Payment Policies (cms.gov).

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