Coding For Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are societal and environmental conditions such as food, housing, transportation, education, experiences, social support and employment that can affect a person’s health. Numerous studies have demonstrated a link between economic status, social factors and physical environment as key influencers in health outcomes.

Using the Social Determinants of Health Codes
Some of these social factors can be captured using the social determinants of health ICD-10-CM codes included in categories Z55-Z65. These codes identify persons with potential health hazards related to socioeconomic and psychosocial circumstances. Social determinants of health ICD-10-CM codes are one of the few tools we collectively have to measure and evaluate social determinants of health. Unfortunately, our claims data shows us that most care providers don’t code for social determinants of health.

Why It’s Important
Social determinants of health ICD-10-CM data can give us important information about patients to help us identify special programs that can enhance your plans of care. Here are just some of the ways we can use the ICD-10-CM data:

- Identify trends based on region and neighborhoods
- Connect members to appropriate resources
- Investigate the social determinants of health ICD-10-CM data to help shape and support solutions for patients
- Create a social determinants of health report to capture important information we’ve gathered from the coding

How You Can Help
When you treat a patient who has a non-medical social need, please consider using the social determinants of health ICD-10-CM codes to capture that information. You can find more information about social determinants of health on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s website at cdc.gov/socialdeterminants.

We’re Here to Help
If you have any questions about social determinants of health or its coding, please contact your Provider Relations Advocate, or contact our Special Needs Unit at 877-844-8844 or uhc-papproviderrelations@uhc.com.