

Documentation and Reporting Substance Use Disorders

DOCUMENTATION TIPS

Documentation of a substance use disorder requires evaluation of the criteria in relation to the patient's symptoms to determine the presence of the disorder and the severity. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) references the term **substance use disorder** to diagnose use, abuse and dependence.² ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes currently report substance use, abuse or dependence.

Documentation of a substance use disorder should address these elements:

- **Substance** – alcohol, opioids, sedatives, hypnotics, anxiolytics, etc.,
- **Severity** – use, abuse or dependence,
- **Symptoms** – maladaptive behavior², drug seeking behavior,
- **Complications** – intoxication, delirium, mood disorders, psychotic disorders,
- **Remission status** – when applicable,
- **Treatment** – counseling, referral for inpatient or outpatient treatment.

Common Reporting Error: Documenting and reporting a substance use disorder when the only symptoms are **tolerance** or **withdrawal** that occur during medical treatment with a prescribed medication taken appropriately.

Substance Use Disorders (not an all-inclusive list)

ICD-10-CM Code	Description
F10.-	Alcohol related disorders
F11.-	Opioid related disorders
F12.-	Cannabis related disorders
F13.-	Sedative, hypnotic or anxiolytic related disorders
F14.-	Cocaine related disorders
F15.-	Other stimulant related disorders

The fourth character identifies the disorder in terms of use, abuse and dependence:

- 1 = abuse
- 2 = dependence
- 3 = use

Substance Use Disorder in Remission (not an all-inclusive list)

Document and report substance abuse or dependence [in remission](#). There is no diagnosis code to report [history of](#) abuse or dependence. The fifth character of **1** identifies remission status:

ICD-10-CM Code	Description
F10.11	Alcohol abuse in remission
F10.21	Alcohol dependence in remission
F11.11	Opioid abuse in remission
F11.21	Opioid dependence in remission
F13.11	Sedative, hypnotic or anxiolytic abuse in remission
F13.21	Sedative, hypnotic or anxiolytic dependence in remission

Severity Reporting

Substance use disorders range in severity from mild to severe, based on the DSM-5 criteria the patient meets that is supported by the provider's documentation.

- Mild = presence of 2-3 symptoms
- Moderate = presence of 4-5 symptoms
- Severe = presence of 6 or more symptoms

The American Psychiatric Association established these criteria for diagnosing substance use disorders and determining severity of disease.²

The patient who experiences a problematic pattern of substance use in which there is clinically significant impairment manifested by **two or more** of the following symptoms within a 12-month period:

- Excessive time spent in activities necessary to obtain or use the substance or recover from its effects
- Recurrent use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school or home
- Important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced due to the substance use
- Substance is used in larger amounts over a longer period than intended
- Unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control the substance use
- Use is continued despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by the substance
- Craving or a strong desire to use
- Recurrent use in situations in which it is physically hazardous
- Continued use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance
- Tolerance
- Withdrawal

Providers may document and report a substance use disorder when the patient demonstrates maladaptive behavior while taking a prescribed medication, i.e., inappropriate or excessive use.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING EXAMPLE

Patient with chronic alcoholism, in remission. Stopped drinking 5 years ago. Continues to attend AA meetings and reports family support to remain sober.

- F10.21 Alcohol dependence, in remission



HEDIS: Detailed information about measures related to substance use disorders is available through your Passport/Molina Quality Representative.

According to the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY2022: “A dash (-) at the end of an alphabetic index entry indicates that additional characters are required.” Refer to the tabular list to identify the appropriate character(s) that will complete the diagnosis code.

1. ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY2022. 1 Oct. 2021, www.cms.gov/files/document/fy-2022-icd-10-cm-coding-guidelines.pdf. Accessed 30 Nov. 2021.
2. American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 5th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association; 2013.