

Primary Health Care Initiatives (PHCI) Project
Contract No. 278-C-00-99-00059-00
Abt. Associates Inc.

ICPC-2 CODING SYSTEM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the basic system of ICPC-2 coding
- Learn to appropriately code all symptoms and problems
- Learn to use the coding book to help resolve differential diagnostic problems

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Distribute the short list of ICPC-2 codes to all participants
- If available, distribute the ICPC-2 code book to all participants
- Briefly explain the organization of the coding system
- Follow with practice on clinical examples in large group or small group work

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- ICPC-2 short lists and/or coding books
- List of clinical examples – either distributed to participants or on transparencies
- Overhead projector and screen

LEARNING POINTS

- Organization of ICPC-2 system of coding
 - ICPC-2 – International Classification for Primary Care – Second Version
 - Specifically designed for problems found in ambulatory and primary care settings
 - Provides much greater specificity and precision than current classification of 17 categories
 - Includes many non-specific symptoms and syndromes, not just diagnoses
 - Often difficult to make specific diagnosis in primary care setting
 - Will often narrow diagnosis to two or three possibilities, treat symptoms, and follow patient
 - Includes section on psychological, psycho-somatic, and psycho-social problems commonly seen in primary care
 - Does not include many problems found in ICD classification (used in hospitals) – because they are not often seen in primary care settings
 - Examples of problems not found in ICPC – nosocomial infections, dialysis shunt infections, methicillin-resistant staph infections
 - ICPC-2 codes can be linked to ICD-10 coding system via manual or computerized linkage table
 - Organized by major systems (eye, ear, respiratory, circulatory, neurologic, etc.)
 - Each code begins with major system involved (letter) (ie, Asthma = R - respiratory, Goiter = T - endocrine)
 - Each letter (system code) followed by a two digit component code (ie. Asthma R96, Goiter – T81)

- May choose from symptom code (numbers 00-10) or diagnosis code (numbers 70-99)
- If complication or subcategory desired, can be indicated by single digit after decimal point (ie, Brucellosis = A78.1)
- Includes codes for procedures, examinations, referrals, administrative visits, etc.
 - Two digit number refers to specific task done, doctor must add letter that corresponds to system
 - Classified as “components” 20 - 60
 - Example; visit for referral to orthopedic surgeon for fracture of arm
 - L (musculo-skel system) L72 (fracture of radius or ulna) to code for visit for fractured arm
 - __64 code for referral initiated by provider; L64 code for referral for problem with musculo-skel system.
- Daily Use of ICPC-2 Coding
 - Codes for visit are determined only for those problems dealt with in that visit
 - Does not need to be a firm diagnosis, but can be primary symptom or symptoms presented if diagnosis uncertain
 - Use expanded definitions in book when necessary to refine diagnosis and coding
 - Example – chickenpox (varicella) – code A72 (page 51)
 - Code of A72 INCLUDES all complications of chickenpox
 - Code of A72 EXCLUDES herpes zoster – a different diagnosis with code of S70
 - Code of A72 should be made by following CRITERIA – “vesicular exanthem which appears in crops, with lesions evolving rapidly from papules to vesicles and then to scabs”
 - If patient symptoms do not match these criteria, could CONSIDER alternative diagnoses – “non-specific fever A03, viral disease with exanthem A76, or non-specific rash S07”

EXERCISES

Indicate the proper code for the following problems noted during a routine visit to the Health Center:

1. acute otitis media
2. otitis externa
3. sprain or strain of the ankle
4. pain in the shoulder
5. pain in the low back
6. cough, URI or bronchitis
7. chronic sinusitis
8. acute tonsillitis
9. sore throat
10. herpes zoster
11. fill out school exam paper
12. refill of medication for diabetes

(Answers: 1. H71, 2. H70, 3. L77, 4. L08, 5. L03, 6. R05, 7. R75, 8. R76, 9. R21, 10. S70, 11. A62, 12. T50)