



Coding for Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

Determining SDOH Risk Factors

Via Standardized Instrument

If SDOH risk factors are determined by the use of a standardized instrument, CPT code 96160 or 96161 can be reported:

96160 *Administration of patient-focused health risk assessment instrument (eg, health hazard appraisal) with scoring and documentation, per standardized instrument*

96161 *Administration of caregiver-focused health risk assessment instrument (eg, depression inventory) for the benefit of the patient, with scoring and documentation, per standardized instrument*

CPT defines “standardized instruments” as follows: Used in the performance of these services. Standardized instruments are validated tests that are administered and scored in a consistent or “standard” manner consistent with their validation.

Codes 96160-96161 are reported in addition to the evaluation and management (E/M) code (eg, 99213).

Via Non-Standardized Instruments or Assessment

If SDOH risk factors are determined by the use of a non-standardized instrument or assessment, CPT codes 96160 or 96161 cannot be reported.

Instead, the determination has an impact on “risk” under medical decision-making (MDM) for the reported E/M code.

Evaluation and Management Services

The “risk” column in the MDM table includes: “Diagnosis or treatment significantly limited by social determinants of health.” What this means is that there is a moderate risk of morbidity to the patient associated with additional testing/treatment if the problem that is being addressed at that visit is significantly limited by SDOH. If the patient has a documented SDOH that fits these criteria, it could potentially lead to a higher-level code. This is appropriate as patients with one more for SDOHs may have a higher risk for morbidity. This was an important addition to the MDM table for 2021. However, it is strongly advised to not only document how the identified SDOH may impact the diagnosis or treatment but also to code for it using the many ICD-10-CM codes available for reporting. While the ICD-10-CM codes for the conditions addressed during the encounter would be reported as primary, the reporting of secondary ICD-10-CM codes to explain the increased complexity caused by the SDOH will be important to tell the whole story to the payers.

For example, a newborn with poor weight gain is formula fed. If the parents are well-resourced, the treatment of scheduled feeds with strict adherence to formula quantity will not be a risk. However, if that same patient has limited access to free formula and no transportation means to get the formula, the treatment now places this patient at a higher risk of treatment failure due to the food shortage in the home. Therefore, the physician may have to do additional work to ensure that this patient is able to get the treatment needed.

ICD-10-CM Codes Specific to Risk

SDOH will not impact all problems or all treatments, or all visits for a patient with limited resources all the time. It will not be enough to simply list the patient’s social challenges; the documentation should include how the limited resource impacts management at that encounter. Even if no specific diagnosis for the SDOH exists, a physician that documents the situation as described should claim credit for moderate risk when selecting the MDM for the encounter.

At the present time we do not have all the diagnosis codes we would like to accurately describe SDOH for a child.

While there are not currently discrete ICD-10-CM codes for “Social Determinants of Health,” the following are examples of existing ICD-10-CM codes commonly used for reporting SDOH risk factors in pediatric patients:

Social Determinant	ICD-10-CM Code/Description
Abuse (history of)	Z62.810 Personal history of physical and sexual abuse in childhood Z62.811 ^a Personal history of psychological abuse in childhood Z62.812 ^a Personal history of neglect in childhood Z62.819 ^a Personal history of unspecified abuse in childhood
Economic Difficulties	Z59.5 Extreme poverty Z59.6 Low income Z59.7 Insufficient social insurance and welfare support Z91.120 Patient's intentional underdosing of medication regimen due to financial hardship
Education	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 Z55.8 Other problems related to education and literacy Z55.9 Problems related to education and literacy, unspecified
Environmentally-compromised Housing (eg, Lead)	Z77.011 Contact with and (suspected) exposure to lead Z77.1 ^a Contact with and (suspected) exposure to environmental pollution and hazards in the physical environment

Family/Primary Support Group Issues (Relationship)	Z63.3 ^a Absence of family member Z63.4 Disappearance and death of family member Z63.5 Disruption of family by separation and divorce Z63.71 Stress on family due to return of family member from military deployment Z63.79 Other stressful life events affecting family and household Z63.0 Problems in relationship with spouse or partner Z63.6 Dependent relative needing care at home Z63.8 Other specified problems related to primary support group Z63.9 Problem related to primary support group, unspecified
Food Insecurity	Z59.4 ^a Lack of adequate food and
Housing issues	Z59.0 Lack of housing (homeless) Z59.1 ^a Inadequate housing Z59.8 ^a Other problems related to housing and economic circumstances Z59.3 Problems related to living in residential institution
Nutrition	Z71.3 Dietary counseling and surveillance Z59.4 ^a Lack of adequate food and safe drinking water
Parent/Sibling-Child Issues	Z62.0 Inadequate parental supervision and control Z62.1 Parental overprotection Z62.3 Hostility towards and scapegoating of child Z62.6 Inappropriate (excessive) parental pressure Z62.820 Parent-biological child conflict Z62.821 Parent-adopted child conflict Z62.822 Parent-foster child conflict Z62.890 Parent-child estrangement NEC Z62.891 Sibling rivalry
Psychosocial Issues	Z64.0 Problems related to unwanted pregnancy Z64.4 Discord with counselors Z65.1 Imprisonment and other incarceration Z65.2 Problems related to release from prison Z65.3 Problems related to other legal circumstances Z65.4 Victim of crime and terrorism Z65.5 Exposure to disaster, war and other hostilities Z65.8 Other specified problems related to psychosocial circumstances Z65.9 Problem related to unspecified psychosocial circumstances
Sleep Issues	Z72.820 Sleep deprivation Z72.821 Inadequate sleep hygiene
Social Issues	Z60.0 Problems of adjustment to life-cycle transitions Z60.3 Acculturation difficulty Z60.4 Social isolation, exclusion and rejection Z60.5 Target of (perceived) adverse discrimination and persecution Z60.8 Other problems related to social environment Z60.9 Problem related to social environment, unspecified
Stress (Not listed elsewhere)	Z73.3 Stress, not elsewhere classified
Substance Use	Z63.72 Alcoholism and drug addiction in family

	Z71.41 Alcohol abuse counseling and surveillance of alcoholic Z71.42 Counseling for family member of alcoholic Z71.51 Drug abuse counseling and surveillance of drug abuser Z71.52 Counseling for family member of drug abuser
Transportation Difficulty	Z59.82 Transportation insecurity
Upbringing Issues	Z62.2 ^a Upbringing away from parents Z62.89 ^a Other specified problems related to upbringing Z62.9 Problem related to upbringing, unspecified
Personal Risk Factors	Z91.1 ^a Patient's noncompliance with medical treatment and regimen Z91.A ^a Caregiver's noncompliance with patient's medical treatment and regimen

Other AAP Resources Related to SDOH Coding

[Trauma Coding Fact Sheet](#)

[Telemedicine Service Coding Fact Sheet](#)

[Care Management Services – Non-Direct Care Coding Fact Sheet](#)

[AAP Coding Hotline](#)