

Medicare Risk Adjustment Coding Focus

Alcohol Use Disorder

Overview

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a medical diagnosis that includes problems with controlling drinking, being unable to stop drinking even when it adversely affects daily life, being preoccupied with drinking or having withdrawal symptoms when drinking is stopped¹. According to the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), over 15 million Americans over the age of 18 have an alcohol use disorder².

Symptoms

Alcohol use disorders are classified as mild, moderate or severe. The level of severity is based upon the number of criteria that are met, which include³:

- Drinking more or for longer periods of time than intended.
- More than once wanting to cut down or to stop but being unable to do so.
- Spending lots of time drinking, or getting over the effects of drinking.
- Wanting a drink so badly that you can't think of anything else.
- Drinking or the effects of drinking interferes with the ability to care for family or causes problems on the job or at school.
- Giving up other interests or activities in order to drink.
- Continued drinking even when it causes problems with friends or family.
- Continued drinking even though it causes health or emotional problems or a blackout.
- Having to drink more than you once did to achieve the same effects.
- More than once gotten into potentially harmful situations during or after drinking.
- Experienced withdrawal symptoms when the effects of alcohol wear off.

Alcohol use disorder is defined as mild when the patient meets 2 or 3 criteria, moderate when there are 4 or 5, and severe when 6 or more of the criteria are met.

Causes and complications

Anyone can develop AUD, but those who regularly drink in excess, started drinking at a young age, have a family history of alcoholism or who suffer from depression or other mental health problems are at a greater risk.

Drinking too much alcohol, whether on a single occasion or over a period of time, can lead to cirrhosis, alcoholic hepatitis, pancreatitis and gastritis as well as high blood pressure, diabetic complications, eye problems, neurological complications and many other health issues.

Coding guidance

Alcohol use disorder codes can be found in chapter five of the ICD-10-CM under code category F10, and contain highly detailed codes to indicate alcohol use, abuse or dependency as well as multiple specifiers to indicate complications such as withdrawal or psychotic disorders and any associated complications. For risk adjustment purposes, the CMS-HCC V22 model lists diagnoses for alcohol related psychosis under HCC 54, and utilizes HCC 55 for diagnoses related to alcohol dependency. Of note, alcohol abuse, uncomplicated (F10.10) is not included in the HCC model.

Alcohol use disorders (HCC 54/55)

F10.1_*	Alcohol abuse
F10.2_*	Alcohol dependence
F10.9_*	Alcohol use
Subcategories include:	
*._0	Uncomplicated
*._1	In remission
._2	with intoxication
._3	with withdrawal
*._4	with induced mood disorder
._5	psychotic disorders
*._6	persisting amnestic disorder
*._7	persisting dementia
._8	other induced disorders
*._9	unspecified induced disorder

* sixth character is required

Resources

- 1 Mayo Clinic. (2017) Alcohol Use Disorder. Accessed May 18, 2017 from mayoclinic.org.
- 2 National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2017). *Alcohol Facts and Statistics*.
- 3 National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2017). *Alcohol Use Disorder: A Comparison Between DSM-IV and DSM-5*. Accessed May 18, 2017 from niaaa.nih.gov.
- 4 Schmidt, A., Kenney, A., Krawzik, K., & Willard, P. (2016). *ICD-10-CM expert for physicians 2017: The complete official code set*. Place of publication not identified: Optum360°.

Reference the ICD-10-CM Codebook, CMS-HCC Risk Adjustment Model(s) and AHA Coding Clinic for complete code sets and official coding guidance.