

Struggling with Z codes?

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Z Codes

CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) has recently released a graphic that could help shed some light.

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/cms-2023-omh-z-code-resource.pdf>

IMPROVING THE COLLECTION OF Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Data with ICD-10-CM Z Codes



What Are Z Codes?

- SDOH-related Z codes range from ICD-10-CM categories Z55-Z65 and are used to document SDOH data (e.g., housing, food insecurity, lack of transportation)
- Z codes refer to factors influencing health status or reasons for contact with health services that are not classifiable elsewhere as diseases, injuries, or external causes



What Are SDOH & Why Collect Them?

SDOH are the conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks¹

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that SDOH accounts for **30-55% of health outcomes**²



Using Z Codes for SDOH

- SDOH information can be collected before, during, or after a health care encounter through structured health risk assessments and screening tools
- These codes should be assigned only when the documentation specifies that the patient has an associated problem or risk factor that influences the patient's health
- Coding professionals may utilize documentation of social information from social workers, community health workers, case managers, or nurses, if their documentation is included in the official medical record

SDOH information can be collected through person-provider interaction or self-reported, as long as it is signed-off on and incorporated into the medical record by a clinician or provider

It is important to screen for SDOH information at each health care encounter to understand circumstances that may have changed in the patient's status



[VIEW JOURNEY MAP](#)

¹ Healthy People 2030 ² World Health Organization



Collecting SDOH can improve equity in health care delivery and research by:

- Empowering providers to identify and address health disparities (e.g., care coordination and referrals)
- Supporting quality measurement
- Supporting planning and implementation of social needs interventions
- Identifying community and population needs
- Monitoring SDOH intervention effectiveness for patient outcomes
- Utilizing data to advocate for updating and creating new policies



ICD-10-CM Z Codes Update

- New SDOH Z codes may become effective each April 1 and October 1. New codes are announced prior to their effective date on [CDC website](#)
- Use the CDC National Center for Health Statistics [ICD-10-CM Browser tool](#) to search for all the current Z codes.
- Join the public process for SDOH code development and approval through the [ICD-10-CM Coordination and Maintenance Committee](#)

Exhibit 1. Recent SDOH Z Code Categories and New Codes

Z55 – Problems related to education and literacy

- Z55.5 – Less than a high school diploma (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- NEW** • Z55.6 – Problems related to health literacy

Z56 – Problems related to employment and unemployment

Z57 – Occupational exposure to risk factors

Z58 – Problems related to physical environment (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z58.6 – Inadequate drinking-water supply (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- NEW** • Z58.8 – Other problems related to physical environment

- NEW** • Z58.81 – Basic services unavailable in physical environment

- NEW** • Z58.89 – Other problems related to physical environment

Z59 – Problems related to housing and economic circumstances

- Z59.0 – Homelessness (Updated)

- Z59.00 – Homelessness unspecified (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.01 – Sheltered homelessness (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.02 – Unsheltered homelessness (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.1 – Inadequate Housing (Updated)

- NEW** • Z59.10 – Inadequate housing, unspecified

- NEW** • Z59.11 – Inadequate housing environmental temperature

- NEW** • Z59.12 – Inadequate housing utilities

- NEW** • Z59.19 – Other inadequate housing

- Z59.4 – Lack of adequate food (Updated)

- Z59.41 – Food insecurity (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.48 – Other specified lack of adequate food (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.8 – Other problems related to housing and economic circumstances (Updated)

- Z59.81 – Housing instability, housed (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.811 – Housing instability, housed, with risk of homelessness (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

- Z59.812 – Housing instability, housed, homelessness in past 12 months (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)
- Z59.819 – Housing instability, housed unspecified (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)
- Z59.82 – Transportation insecurity (Added, Oct. 1, 2022)
- Z59.86 – Financial insecurity (Added, Oct. 1, 2022)
- Z59.87 – Material hardship due to limited financial resources, not elsewhere classified (Added, Oct. 1, 2022; Revised, April 1, 2023)
- Z59.89 – Other problems related to housing and economic circumstances (Added, Oct. 1, 2021)

Z60 – Problems related to social environment

Z62 – Problems related to upbringing

- Z62.2 – Upbringing away from parents
- NEW** • Z62.23 – Child in custody of non-parental relative (Added, Oct. 1, 2023)
- NEW** • Z62.24 – Child in custody of non-relative guardian (Added, Oct. 1, 2023)
- Z62.8 – Other specified problems related to upbringing (Updated)
 - Z62.81 – Personal history of abuse in childhood
 - NEW** • Z62.814 – Personal history of child financial abuse
 - NEW** • Z62.815 – Personal history of intimate partner abuse in childhood
 - Z62.82 – Parent-child conflict
 - NEW** • Z62.823 – Parent-step child conflict (Added, Oct. 1, 2023)
 - Z62.83 – Non-parental relative or guardian-child conflict (Added Oct. 1, 2023)
 - NEW** • Z62.831 – Non-parental relative-child conflict (Added Oct. 1, 2023)
 - NEW** • Z62.832 – Non-relative guardian-child conflict (Added Oct. 1, 2023)
 - NEW** • Z62.833 – Group home staff-child conflict (Added Oct. 1, 2023)
 - Z62.89 – Other specified problems related to upbringing
 - NEW** • Z62.892 – Runaway [from current living environment] (Added Oct. 1, 2023)

Z63 – Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances

Z64 – Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstance

Z65 – Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances