

Make EPIC Work for You: EPIC Solutions to Improve Documentation and Coding

Office visit documentation has evolved over the years. Provider notes were once simple notes on paper that were mostly used to remind a provider of what was done during a visit.

That practice evolved and notes became scripted to comply with government and commercial insurance requirements to improve communication and to optimize evaluation and management codes for payment. And now at least once a year providers are being asked to also document at a face-to-face visit all active chronic conditions and statuses and to ensure these conditions are reflected in claim submissions in the form of ICD-10 codes. This added requirement is essential to fully reflect the disease burden of a provider's patient and of their total patient population. To maximize the risk adjustment opportunities and to minimize the time needed to do the documentation, consider getting the most out of your EHR and its SmartTools.

Problem List Management

1. Keep the active problem list current for all chronic conditions
2. Move inactive problems to History
3. Include "Status of" diagnoses Z85-Z99; for example, Z89.511 "Acquired absence of right leg below knee"
4. Consider problem list preference lists and eliminate nonspecific diagnoses

Problem List Documentation (Options for an annual comprehensive review)

1. Consider problem list documentation once annually to ensure each active diagnosis is included in an office visit encounter and drops with the claim
2. The ProbEdited SmartLink will display the problem PLUS Overview comments for all problem list items edited or added during the encounter

3. You can combine .ProbEdited with .PROBAP SmartLink to show the Overview plus your assessment and plan notes if desired

Medications

1. Always associate prescription and OTC meds with an active diagnosis
2. Do medication reconciliation at each visit
3. Whenever possible, refill medications within office visits so that the linked diagnosis is automatically added to the encounter diagnoses and drops with the claim
4. Consider ordering medications within the problem list under the diagnosis to naturally associate the medication to the chronic condition

Visit diagnoses

1. Use the 3 letter rule to find the most complete and accurate diagnosis; for example, "dia mel wit nep" will quickly find E11.21 Diabetes mellitus type 2 with diabetic nephropathy
2. If using more generic diagnoses on your problem lists, ensure that Epic is configured to translate them to specific diagnoses when moved to the visit diagnosis activity

Visit Documentation

1. Create SmartTexts and SmartPhrases for comprehensive chronic disease follow up visits
2. Consider use of common SmartLinks like .prob as a framework for the history of the present illness
3. Use .diagmed to pull in all diagnoses and their associated orders (including medications) into the assessment and plan