

## Documentation and Coding Tips

## Depressive Disorders

Documentation of depressive disorders is important to adequately describe the severity of the patient's illness and for accurate coding.

### Specify When Documenting:

Include the required specific information below for accurate coding of depressive disorders. In the absence of key documentation elements, our default codes are: F32.9-Major depressive disorder, single episode, unspecified or F32.A-Depression, unspecified (Depression NOS, Depressive disorder NOS).

- **Episode:** Single or recurrent
  - Single-A patient experiences only one single depressive episode during their lifetime.
  - Recurrent-Considered recurrent when there is an interval of at least two consecutive months between separate episodes during which criteria are not met for a major depressive episode.
- **Severity:** Mild, moderate, severe, with or without psychotic features
- **Clinical Status:** Partial or full remission
  - In remission-With appropriate treatment, the patient's depression symptoms may be controlled, in which case they are considered "in remission". They still carry the diagnosis of major depression.
  - Partial-Occasional symptoms from a previous major depressive episode without meeting full criteria or a hiatus lasting less than two months without any significant symptoms.
  - Full-No significant signs or symptoms of the disturbance present during the past two months.
- **Underlying cause of depression, if known**
- **Any comorbidities, if known**
- **Treatment Plan/Results:** Screening, testing, medication, counseling/therapy, referrals

### Documentation & Coding Examples

**Non-specific Documentation Example:**

65-year old male seen today for depression. He is responding well to citalopram.

**Assign Code:** F32.A Depression, unspecified.

**Specific Documentation Example:**

72-year old female with prior known episodes of major depressive disorder, severe without psychosis. Her symptoms are worsening with increased loss of interest in activities, sadness and she is tearful today. Denies self-harm. We will increase her Lexapro dosage to 20 mg and will see her for follow up appointment in 2 weeks.

**Assign Code:** F33.2 Major depressive disorder, recurrent, severe without psychotic features.