

## Coding and Documentation Spotlight: Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

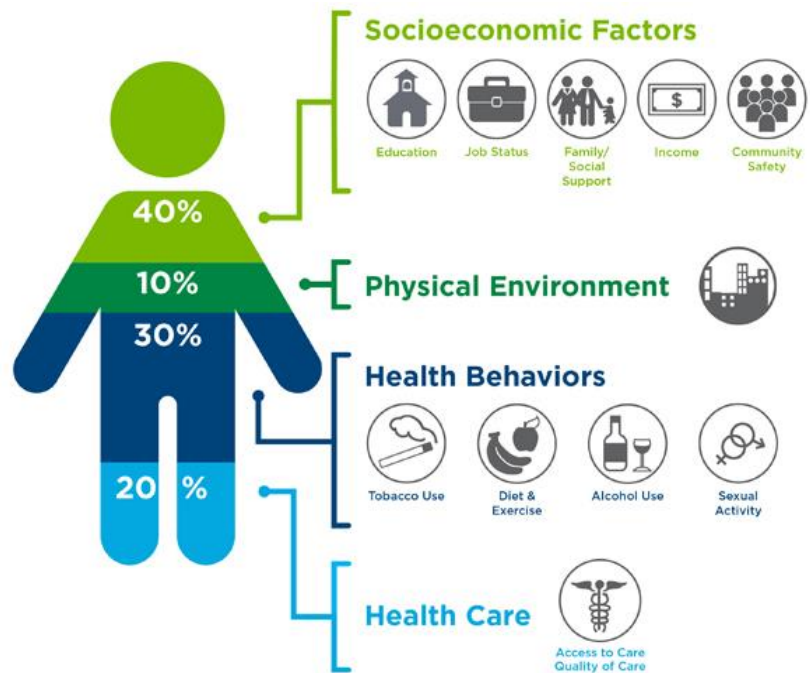
Florida Blue Medicare appreciates the care and attention you provide to our members. To better track and address the social needs of our members, we recommend you incorporate Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) ICD-10 Z codes on the claims you submit to us. Any clinician (physician, nurse, social worker, community health worker, case manager, or other provider) can document a person's social needs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines SDOH as circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, age, and the systems put into place to deal with illness.

These circumstances have a tremendous effect on one's health and can affect anyone, regardless of age, race or ethnicity. Numerous studies have shown economic status, social factors, and physical environment are key influencers in health outcomes.

### What Goes into Your Health?

- 20% of a person's health and well-being is related to access to care and quality of services.
- The physical environment, social determinants and behavioral factors drive 80% of health outcomes.
- More specifically, that 80% can be broken down as follows:
  - ✓ Roughly 40% is attributed to socioeconomic factors: education, job status, family/social support, income and community safety.
  - ✓ 10% to physical environment: housing
  - ✓ 30% to health behaviors: tobacco abuse, diet and exercise, alcohol use and sexual activity



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement, Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems (October 2014)

  
The Bridgespan Group

## Using Social Determinants of Health ICD-10 Codes

Each patient brings more to your office than the symptoms they present on the surface. Social determinants of health may affect a patient's ability or willingness to follow their recommended treatment plan. For this reason, it is important to adopt a "whole person" approach. Additionally, some patients' limited access to stable phone and mailing resources can lead to disruptions to their care. By working together, we can help remove barriers and improve the health and quality of life for our members.

The SDOH codes are powerful tools to capture the complexity of patient populations. These additional factors affecting a patient's health can justify higher levels of evaluation and management services, prolonged services, extended monitoring, risk adjustment payment methodologies, etc. Using ICD-10 Z code data, Florida Blue Medicare can improve our understanding of the unique social needs of our members and can help connect affected members with available resources.

## Documenting SDOH

Code assignment is based on the documentation by the patient's provider (i.e., the physician or other qualified health care practitioner legally responsible for establishing the patient's diagnosis). Truly paint the picture of the "whole" patient anywhere on the progress note, as the entire record should be reviewed to collect adequate information to support these codes.

## Coding SDOH

SDOH codes are represented in ICD-10-CM code categories Z55 to Z65 — persons with potential health hazards related to socioeconomic and psychosocial circumstances. These codes include the following:

Code Grouping	Examples
Z55 — Problems related to education and literacy	Illiteracy/low level of literacy, school unavailable
Z56 — Problems related to employment and unemployment	Unemployment, change of job, threat of job loss, military deployment status, sexual harassment on the job
Z57 — Occupational exposure to risk factors	Occupational exposure to noise, radiation, dust, tobacco, toxic agents in agriculture, extreme temperature
Z59 — Problems related to housing and economic circumstances	Homelessness, inadequate housing, discord with neighbors, extreme poverty, low income
Z60 — Problems related to social environment	Adjustment to lifestyle transition, problems living alone, acculturation difficulty, social exclusion and rejection
Z62 — Problems related to upbringing	Inadequate parental supervisions and control, parental overprotection, institutional upbringing
Z63 — Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances	Problems with spousal or other relationship, absence of a family member, alcoholism or drug addiction in family
Z64 — Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances	Problems with unwanted pregnancy, problems related to multiparity, discord with counselors
Z65 — Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances	Conviction, imprisonment, victim of crime or terrorism

- Documentation can be used to assign Z codes as long as it meets requirements for inclusion in the patient’s medical record based on regulatory requirements, accreditation requirements or internal hospital policies.
- If the patient’s self-reported information is signed-off and incorporated into the health record by either a clinician or provider, it would be appropriate to assign codes from categories Z55-Z65, describing social determinants of health. (Coding Clinic Fourth Quarter 2019, Pages 52-53)
- Z codes are used to report social determinants. Ensure the code is not on the “primary diagnosis” list only
- Assign as many codes as necessary to fully explain each health care encounter. Since patient history information may be very limited, use any available documentation to assign the appropriate external cause of morbidity and Z codes.
- Resources
  - World Health Organization, About social determinants of health, found online at: [https://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/sdh\\_definition/en](https://www.who.int/social_determinants/sdh_definition/en).
  - ICD-10 CM coding book
  - ICD-10 Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY 2021
  - AHA Coding Clinic

## SDOH Diagnosis Code Reference

### Problems related to education and literacy

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

### Problems related to employment and unemployment

Z56.0 — Unemployment, unspecified  
 Z56.1 — Change of job  
 Z56.2 — Threat of job loss  
 Z56.3 — Stressful work schedule  
 Z56.4 — Discord with boss and workmates  
 Z56.5 — Uncongenial work  
 Z56.6 — Other physical and mental strain related to work  
 Z56.8 — Other problems related to employment:  
 Z56.81 — Sexual harassment on the job  
 Z56.82 — Military deployment status  
 Z56.89 — Other problems related to employment  
 Z56.9 — Unspecified problems related to employment

### Occupational exposure to risk factors

Z57.0 — Occupational exposure to noise  
 Z57.1 — Occupational exposure to radiation  
 Z57.2 — Occupational exposure to dust  
 Z57.3 — Occupational exposure to other air contaminants  
 Z57.31 — Occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke  
 Z57.39 — Occupational exposure to other air contaminants  
 Z57.4 — Occupational exposure to toxic agents in agriculture  
 Z57.5 — Occupational exposure to toxic agents in other industries  
 Z57.6 — Occupational exposure to extreme temperature  
 Z57.7 — Occupational exposure to vibration  
 Z57.8 — Occupational exposure to other risk factors  
 Z57.9 — Occupational exposure to unspecified risk factor

### Problems related to housing and economic circumstances

Z59.0 — Homelessness  
 Z59.1 — Inadequate housing  
 Z59.2 — Discord with neighbors, lodgers and landlord  
 Z59.3 — Problems related to living in residential institution  
 Z59.4 — Lack of adequate food and safe drinking water

Z59.5 — Extreme poverty  
Z59.6 — Low income  
Z59.7 — Insufficient social insurance and welfare support  
Z59.8 — Other problems related to housing and economic circumstances  
Z59.9 — Problem related to housing and economic circumstances, unspecified

**Problems related to social environment**

Z60.0 — Problems of adjustment to life-cycle transitions  
Z60.2 — Problems related to living alone  
Z60.3 — Acculturation difficulty  
Z60.4 — Social exclusion and rejection  
Z60.5 — Target of (perceived) adverse discrimination and persecution  
Z60.8 — Other problems related to social environment  
Z60.9 — Problems related to social environment, unspecified

**Problems related to upbringing**

Z62.0 — Inadequate parental supervision and control  
Z62.1 — Parental overprotection  
Z62.2 — Upbringing away from parents  
Z62.21 — Child in welfare custody  
Z62.22 — Institutional upbringing  
Z62.29 — Other upbringing away from parents  
Z62.3 — Hostility towards and scapegoating of child  
Z62.6 — Inappropriate (excessive) parental pressure  
Z62.8 — Other specified problems related to upbringing  
Z62.81 — Personal history of abuse in childhood  
Z62.810 — Personal history of physical and sexual abuse in childhood  
Z62.811 — Personal history of psychological abuse in childhood  
Z62.812 — Personal history of neglect in childhood  
Z62.813 — Personal history of forced labor or sexual exploitation in childhood  
Z62.819 — Personal history of unspecified abuse in childhood  
Z62.82 — Parent-child conflict  
Z62.820 — Parent-biological child conflict  
Z62.821 — Parent-adopted child conflict  
Z62.822 — Parent-foster child conflict  
Z62.89 — Other specified problems related to upbringing  
Z62.890 — Parent-child estrangement NEC  
Z62.891 — Sibling rivalry

Z62.898 — Other specified problems related to upbringing  
Z62.9 — Problem related to upbringing, unspecified

**Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances**

Z63.0 — Problems in relationship with spouse or partner  
Z63.1 — Problems in relationship with in-laws  
Z63.3 — Absence of family member  
Z63.31 — Due to military deployment  
Z63.32 — Other absence of family member  
Z63.4 — Disappearance and death of family member  
Z63.5 — Disruption of family by separation and divorce  
Z63.6 — Dependent relative needing care at home  
Z63.7 — Other stressful life events affecting family and household  
Z63.71 — Stress on family due to return of family member from military deployment  
Z63.72 — Alcoholism and drug addiction in family  
Z63.79 — Other stressful life events affecting family and household  
Z63.8 — Other specified problems related to primary support group  
Z63.9 — Problem related to primary support group, unspecified

**Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances**

Z64.0 — Problems related to unwanted pregnancy  
Z64.1 — Problems related to multiparity  
Z64.4 — Discord with counselors

**Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances**

Z65.0 — Conviction in civil and criminal proceedings without imprisonment  
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 — Problems related to unspecified psychosocial circumstances.