

Molina Healthcare

Coding Education

Alcohol Use Disorder



Alcohol Use Disorder

DSM-IV outlined separate diagnostic criteria for alcohol dependence and alcohol abuse. DSM-V now has combined these two conditions into one diagnosis, **Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)**. DSM-5 characterizes AUD as a problematic pattern of alcohol use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress as manifested by multiple psychosocial, behavioral, or physiologic features, and use that has features described by the DSM-5 criteria. DSM-5 further breaks down the disorder severity into mild (2-3 symptoms), moderate (4-5 symptoms), and severe (6 or more of the 11 criteria). It also groups remission into two categories: early remission (3-12 months of no symptoms other than cravings), and sustained remission (12 or more months of no symptoms other than cravings).

For documenting purposes, alcohol abuse correlates to mild AUD, and alcohol dependence correlates with moderate and severe AUD. Alcohol use is any other use that is characterized by: use of amounts that result in the risk of health consequences, use that has already resulted in health consequences, or use that meets some of the DSM-V AUD criteria, but not diagnostic of abuse or dependence.

For optimal ICD-10-CM coding, there are other factors that need documented:

- Associated intoxication, withdrawal, delirium, or dementia
- Associated psychotic, anxiety or mood disorder
- Associated sexual dysfunction or sleep disorder
- Any other unspecified disorders or complications

Documentation Examples:

Initial Diagnosis:

Assessment: Patient with tolerance, use has increased from 10 12-oz beers daily to 18-20 12-oz beers daily. Has tried but states he's unable to stop use despite work and marriage problems due to alcohol. Missing work 3-4 days/month. Late to work several times/week. Increase in intensity and frequency of arguments with wife. Wife threatening to divorce. Patient is aware of health risks of continuing use, given A-fib and Coumadin medication therapy.

Plan: Referred patient to AA meetings or other 12-step support program. Patient will consider.

- **ICD-10 Code:** F10.20, Alcohol dependence, uncomplicated

Established Diagnosis:

Assessment: Patient is alcohol dependent, sober for 8 years.

Plan: Patient encouraged to continue abstinence and continue AA attendance.

- **ICD-10 Code:** F10.21, Alcohol dependence, in remission

The **CAGE Questionnaire** is an effective tool in assessing alcohol abuse and dependence. The tool is not diagnostic, but is indicative of the existence of alcohol use disorder. A positive screen must be followed by a clinical assessment to determine diagnosis.

**The codes used in this document are for illustrative purposes only*

Have Questions?

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