

To: AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia Providers

Date: April 12, 2017

Subject: ICD-10-CM Code Z59.0 (Problems Related to Housing & Economic Circumstances)

Summary: To better serve the complex needs of patients experiencing homelessness, AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia is asking providers to use the Z59.0 code in claims when you encounter a homeless patient.

Background:

AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia is working to better serve the needs of members who are homeless as they utilize components of the health care system. Proper coding is essential because improved data gathering informs responsive clinical and health promotion programs for this population.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) have developed official guidelines for coding and reporting of ICD-10-CM data, with a specific chapter dedicated to the factors influencing health status and contact with health services. The ICD-10-CM code for homelessness is Z59.0. The guidelines mentioned above specify that Z codes can be used in any health care setting and "may be used as either a first-listed (principal diagnosis code in the inpatient setting) or secondary code, depending on the circumstances of the encounter."

In October 2016, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council released information on the importance of properly coding patients experiencing issues related to homelessness. The full report is available at <https://www.nhchc.org/2016/10/new-publication-ask-code-documenting-homelessness-throughout-the-health-care-system/>.

Action Needed:

Providers should utilize the ICD-10-CM Z59.0 code for all patients experiencing issues related to homelessness.

Questions:

If you have any questions about this communication, please contact your AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia Provider Network Account Executive or Provider Services at 202-408-2237 or 1-888-656-2383.

Sources:

The ICD-10 is owned, published, and copyrighted by the World Health Organization (WHO), and administered in the United

States by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), to promote international comparability on the reporting of mortality statistics.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting, FY 2016, Chapter 21, Factors influencing health status and contact with health services (Z00-Z99), page 81. Available at: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/codingicd10/downloads/2016-icd-1Q-cm-guidelines.pdf>.