▲ Measure #173: Preventive Care and Screening: Unhealthy Alcohol Use – Screening

2012 PHYSICIAN QUALITY REPORTING OPTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEASURES:
CLAIMS, REGISTRY

DESCRIPTION:
Percentage of patients aged 18 years and older who were screened for unhealthy alcohol use using a systematic screening method within 24 months

INSTRUCTIONS:
This measure is to be reported a minimum of once per reporting period for patients seen during the reporting period. This measure is intended to determine whether or not all patients aged 18 years and older were screened for unhealthy alcohol use during the reporting period. There is no diagnosis associated with this measure. This measure may be reported by clinicians who perform the quality actions described in the measure based on the services provided and the measure-specific denominator coding.

Measure Reporting via Claims:
CPT codes, G-codes, and patient demographics are used to identify patients who are included in the measure's denominator. CPT Category II codes are used to report the numerator of the measure.

When reporting the measure via claims, submit the listed CPT codes and the appropriate CPT Category II code OR the CPT Category II code(s) with the modifier. The modifiers allowed for this measure are: 1P- medical reason, 8P- reason not otherwise specified. All measure-specific coding should be reported on the claim(s) representing the eligible encounter.

Measure Reporting via Registry:
CPT codes, G-codes, and patient demographics are used to identify patients who are included in the measure's denominator. The numerator options as described in the quality-data codes are used to report the numerator of the measure. The quality-data codes listed do not need to be submitted for registry-based submissions; however, these codes may be submitted for those registries that utilize claims data.

DENOMINATOR:
All patients aged 18 years and older

Denominator Criteria (Eligible Cases):
Patients aged ≥ 18 years on date of encounter
AND
Patient encounter during the reporting period (CPT or HCPCS): 90801, 90802, 90804, 90805, 90806, 90807, 90808, 90809, 90810, 90811, 90812, 90813, 90814, 90815, 90845, 90862, 96150, 96152, 97003, 97004, 97802, 97803, 97804, 98960, 98961, 98962, 99201, 99202, 99203, 99204, 99205, 99212, 99213, 99214, 99215, G0270, G0271, G0438, G0439

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NUMERATOR:
Patients who were screened for unhealthy alcohol use using a systematic screening method within 24 months

Definition:
Unhealthy Alcohol Use – Covers a spectrum that is associated with varying degrees of risk to health. Categories representing unhealthy alcohol use include risky use, problem drinking, harmful use, and alcohol abuse, and the less common but more severe alcoholism and alcohol dependence. Risky use is defined as > 7 standard drinks per week or > 3 drinks per occasion for women and persons > 65 years of age; > 14 standard drinks per week or > 4 drinks per occasion for men ≤ 65 years of age.

Numerator Quality-Data Coding Options for Reporting Satisfactorily:
Unhealthy Alcohol Use Screening Performed
CPT II 3016F: Patient screened for unhealthy alcohol use using a systematic screening method

OR

Unhealthy Alcohol Use Screening not Performed, for Medical Reasons
Append a modifier (1P) to CPT Category II code 3016F to report documented circumstances that appropriately exclude patients from the denominator.
3016F *with* 1P: Documentation of medical reason(s) for not screening for unhealthy alcohol use (e.g., limited life expectancy)

OR

Unhealthy Alcohol Use Screening not Performed, Reason not Specified
Append a reporting modifier (8P) to CPT Category II code 3016F to report circumstances when the action described in the numerator is not performed and the reason is not otherwise specified.
3016F *with* 8P: Unhealthy alcohol use screening not performed, reason not otherwise specified

RATIONALE:
Screening for unhealthy alcohol use can identify patients can identify patients whose habits may put them at risk for adverse health outcomes due to their alcohol use. While this measure does not require counseling for those patients to be found at risk, brief counseling interventions for unhealthy alcohol use have shown to be effective in reducing alcohol use. It would be expected that if a provider found their patient to be at risk after screening that intervention would be provided. A systematic method of assessing for unhealthy alcohol use should be utilized. Please refer to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism publication: *Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much: A Clinician's Guide* for additional information regarding systematic screening methods.

CLINICAL RECOMMENDATION STATEMENTS:
The USPSTF strongly recommends screening and behavioral counseling interventions to reduce alcohol misuse by adults, including pregnant women, in primary care settings. (B Recommendation) (USPSTF, 2004)

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During new patient encounters and at least annually, patients in general and mental healthcare settings should be screened for at-risk drinking, alcohol use problems and illnesses, and any tobacco use. (NQF, 2007)

All patients identified with alcohol use in excess of National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism guidelines and/or any tobacco use should receive brief motivational counseling intervention by a healthcare worker trained in this technique. (NQF, 2007)

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