

## Risk Adjustment Coding Corner

Neighborhood News – January 2026

### Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

- In patients who have undergone a kidney transplant (status post or s/p kidney transplant), the provider must document the status of the transplant.
- The presence of CKD alone post kidney transplant does **not** indicate a complication of the transplant. Patients may still have some form of CKD. However, if CKD is a complication of the transplant, the provider documentation must make the link between the condition and the transplanted organ.
- A **transplant complication** is coded if the **function** of the transplanted organ is affected. Examples include:
  - Transplant patients who progress to end-stage renal disease (ESRD) requiring dialysis again
  - Transplant patients who present with acute kidney failure (AKF)
- **Documentation Tips**
  - Documentation should include information such as the disease process and an indication of the patient's dialysis or kidney transplant status.
  - All new symptoms that show disease progression, regression, complications, and side effects to treatment should be clearly stated in the record.
  - Avoid unclear verbiage such as "pt with ESRD s/p transplant 10 years ago." Does the patient currently have ESRD or is this a historical condition?
  - A provider's documentation of "renal insufficiency" does not mean a patient has CKD unless the provider documents "chronic renal insufficiency."
  - Providers should document the stage of disease in the final diagnosis.

### References

- <https://hiacode.com/blog/education/coding-complications-of-transplanted-organs>
- <https://www.outsourcestrategies.com/blog/icd-10-2018-coding-guidelines-for-chronic-kidney-disease/>
- <https://www.aapc.com/blog/29460-kidney-transplant-dx-coding>
- <https://www.aapc.com/blog/89202-the-risky-business-of-coding-ckd-and-esrd>
- AHA Coding Clinic, Third Quarter 2003
- AHA Coding Clinic, Second Quarter 2019 (Page 7)

**We want to hear from you!**

Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island welcomes your input for future Risk Adjustment Coding Corner topics. What would you like to learn more about? Please send any suggestions, feedback, or questions to [RiskAdjustment@nhpri.org](mailto:RiskAdjustment@nhpri.org).