



COVID-19 Update



As we begin to turn the corner on the COVID-19 pandemic, we have a lot to look forward to, from going back to seeing our loved ones without a mask and a six-foot radius to in-person conferences and/or vacations that may or may not involve a plane. Take minute to allow yourselves to breathe a sigh of relief that the end is near!

On behalf of the WHA Information Center, we again want to thank you for your efforts, communication, and commitment to timely submission of discharge data during this difficult year.

Below are a few updates from sources that you may find helpful as we continue to move forward in our daily operations.

COVID-19 Data Discharge Data Update

As you might have guessed (and noted) there were significant declines and fluctuations in the first half of 2020 due to COVID-19. The patient data has since been steadied and trending much like it had prior to the pandemic. In other words, the last half of 2020 is shaping up to be in line with historical norms.

As a reminder, all **self-pay or uninsured COVID patient data needs to be submitted** even if you have a Do Not Bill (DNB) on the record. To account for all patients receiving COVID-related services, we need to receive a [dummy] claim even if your facility intends to write these off. Although, before your organization considers DNB or write-offs, please note there are resources available for uninsured patients – see below.

[Health Resources & Service Administration \(HRSA\)](#) offers COVID-19 claims reimbursement to health care providers and facilities for testing, treatment, and vaccine administration **for the uninsured**.

Vaccines are being federally purchased at this time, so there is no charge or reimbursement for them. We encourage you to review the Medicare rules as it relates to patients and billed charges. It is also stipulated that people without health insurance or whose insurance does not provide coverage for vaccination administration can get a COVID-19 vaccine at no cost. For more information on how the [CARES Act](#) works, or reimbursement, refer to the [Provider Relief Fund](#).

Additional COVID-19 Resources

[ForwardHealth](#) has published Alert 033, titled "New COVID-19-Related Diagnosis Codes Available for Claims Submission Effective January 1, 2021," to the [COVID-19: ForwardHealth Provider News and Resources](#) Portal page.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services – Learn about [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) and the many resources available.



The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services ([CMS](#)) has a great deal of information for health care professionals and researchers as well as updates to code changes, coverage, and reimbursement benefits for care including vaccines.

Monthly Data Submissions in WIpop

WHAIC has made enormous strides in implementing new technologies and developing interactive dashboards to improve our customers' data use experience. These efforts continue to allow us the opportunity to improve and leverage our data outputs and data collection processes to deliver on our promise of being the leader in data collection.

Historically, we have performed analysis on the WIpop data only after it was transformed and released. However, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted us to adapt more quickly and create internal dashboards based on pre-released WIpop data. Real-time data allows us the opportunity to analyze the impact of the pandemic in a much more-timely manner.

Moving forward, we are encouraging hospitals and ASCs to submit monthly discharge data batch files instead of waiting until the end of the quarter. Monthly submissions help to support and enrich the data and provides a better view of what is happening in today's health care market versus waiting nearly seven (7) months after the first date of the quarter to reap the rewards of the data.

2021 Social Determinants of Health Care

Journal of AHIMA: Social Determinant ICD-10 Codes Can Be Assigned Based on Non-physician Documentation

The American Hospital Association (AHA) recently reaffirmed that providers can assign social determinant codes in ICD-10-CM **based on documentation from any member of the care team**, including non-physicians such as social workers, case managers, nurses, and other allied staff.

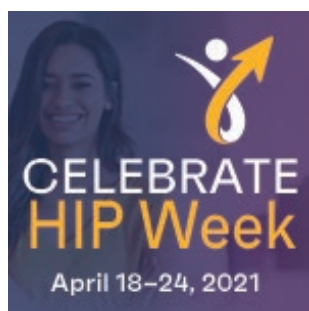
[Understanding Social Determinants of Health \(SDoH\)](#)

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age **that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks**. According to the American Hospital Association (AHA) "hospitals and health systems are working to address their patients' social needs and the broader social determinants of health in the communities they serve. This includes societal and environmental conditions such as food, housing, transportation, education, violence, social support, health behaviors and employment. Robust data related to patients' social needs is critical to hospitals' efforts to improve the health of their patients and communities..."

However, in order to achieve actionable information and awareness in the communities we serve, facilities must commit to collecting and reporting the correct ICD-10-CM codes ([Z55-Z65](#)) in the EMR and claim files. Together we can remind ourselves that patients are human and collectively we can work simultaneously to find areas of improvement in connecting patients to local community resources such as foodbanks, nonprofit programs, transportation, and other sources of social care network programs.



WHAIC will continue to work with the WHA leadership, hospitals, and ASCs on identifying areas of improvement in the data to increase the usefulness and understanding of social determinants of health.



**Keeping Health
Information
HUMAN**

HEALTH INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS WEEK

In keeping with the theme for HIP Week – Jennifer Mueller and I (Cindy Case) will be hosting a lunch-and-learn to hear from you, your stories (good, bad, funny, or sad). We want to understand the impact COVID had on you, your family, job, or overall wellness.

We don't and won't have all the answers, but we do understand the human aspect and the toll COVID-19 took on a lot of folks in the health care environment. The pressures health information professionals endure in the health care arena and how you dealt with this exceptionally crazy uncertain past year with your family, kids, school, zoom or team meetings. Did you find yourself with a dog or child as a new coworker? Or perhaps you never worked from home and had the psychological burden of going into the health care environment this past year. What's your favorite memory or worse story you would like to share that had an impact on you or your family during the pandemic?

To participate in our **lunch-and-learn on April 21, 2021**, please click [\[here\]](#). Stories may be uploaded in advance or if you would like to share verbally during the meeting, simply click the share meeting option during registration. With your permission, the stories may be shared on our website and during our lunch-and-learn program. We believe everyone should be given the opportunity to share their experiences to learn, laugh, confirm they are not alone, or simply move past the trauma.

We will hold several drawings for attendees' participation and personal stories.