

New ICD-10-CM Code for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

On March 11, 2020 the Novel Coronavirus Disease, COVID-19, was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. On March 13, 2020 a national emergency was declared in the United States concerning the COVID-19 Outbreak.

Given these developments, and the urgent need to capture the reporting of this condition in our nation's claims and surveillance data, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), under the National Emergencies Act, announced a change in the effective date of the new diagnosis code **U07.1**, COVID-19, from October 1, 2020 to April 1, 2020. This off-cycle update is unprecedented and is an exception to the code set updating process established under HIPAA.

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) disease outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

As a result of the declaration, the WHO Family of International Classifications (WHOFIC) Network Classification and Statistics Advisory Committee (CSAC) convened an emergency meeting on January 31, 2020 to discuss the creation of a specific code for this new coronavirus. A new International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) emergency code (U07.1, 2019-nCoV acute respiratory disease) was established by WHO.

At that time, the WHO Classification Team had noted that the virus name '2019-nCoV' was temporary and likely to change (to be independent of date and virus family, and for consistency with international virus taxonomy). The WHO announced the official name of the virus on February 11, 2020 as COVID-19.

Consistent with this WHO update to the ICD-10, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics (CDC/NCHS) implemented a new diagnosis code into the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM) for reporting, effective with the next update, which normally would not have taken place until October 1, 2020.

The new diagnosis code U07.1 is unusually shorter than the current ICD-10 codes that have been in use since ICD-10 implementation in 2015. Our software company has provided us with an update to accommodate the new shorter code.

Information included in this article has been obtained through resources provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).