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7/2/26

Certified Medical Assistant

Medical Coding Assessment Form

Mrs. Thompson Case Study

Patient Information

Patient Name: Mrs. Thompson

Date of Visit: July 2, 2026

Chief Complaint:

Persistent cough, fever, and shortness of breath for four days

Diagnosis Provided by Physician:

Community-acquired pneumonia, right lower lobe

Step One: Review of Patient Medical Record

Patient Summary

- Age: 82 years
- Gender: Female
- Chief Complaint: Productive cough, fever (101.8°F), chills, and difficulty breathing
- History of Present Illness: Symptoms began four days ago and have progressively worsened. Chest X-ray confirms pneumonia in the right lower lobe.
- Past Medical History: Hypertension
- Assessment: Community-acquired pneumonia affecting the right lower lobe

- *Treatment Plan: Oral antibiotics, increased fluid intake, rest, and follow-up in one week*
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Step Two: ICD-10 Diagnostic Code Selection

ICD-10 Code:

J18.9 – Pneumonia, unspecified organism

Step Three: Explanation of Code Selection

The assigned ICD-10-CM code J18.9 is appropriate because the physician documented pneumonia without identifying a specific infectious organism. This code is used when the causative agent is not specified in the medical record.

This selection follows ICD-10-CM coding guidelines and accurately reflects the clinical documentation provided.

Purposes of the Diagnostic Coding System

Claims Submission

Diagnostic codes ensure accurate billing and reimbursement by allowing insurance providers to process healthcare claims efficiently and consistently.

Diagnosis Tracking

ICD-10 codes support continuity of care by maintaining standardized patient records and tracking disease progression over time.

Statistical Data for Research

Coding data is used for public health reporting, medical research, and analysis of healthcare trends and outcomes.

Step Four: Alphabetic & Tabular Index Consultation

The Alphabetic Index is used first to locate the potential diagnosis based on the documented condition. The Tabular Index is then reviewed to confirm code accuracy, ensure proper specificity, and identify any instructional notes or coding guidelines.

Both indexes must be consulted to ensure correct and compliant ICD-10-CM code assignment.

Step Five: Submission Statement

This assessment includes:

- *Review of patient medical documentation*
 - *ICD-10-CM code selection*
 - *Justification for code assignment*
 - *Explanation of the diagnostic coding system's purposes*
 - *Proper Use of Alphabetic and Tabular Indexes*
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References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). International classification of diseases, 10th revision, clinical modification (ICD-10-CM).

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/icd-10-cm.htm>

World Health Organization. (2019). International statistical classification of diseases and related health problems (11th rev.).

<https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/classification-of-diseases>

American Health Information Management Association. (2023). ICD-10-CM coding handbook with guidelines. AHIMA Press