

C.F.R.

Clinical Financial Resource, Inc.



Evaluation & Management Documentation Tips

E/M is based on three elements: History of present illness (HPI), Physical Exam (PE) and Medical Decision Making (MDM). Documentation should accurately reflect each of the 3 required elements in order to have the appropriate E/M assigned:

History of present illness (HPI)

99281	1-3 Elements	0 ROS
99282	1-3 Elements	1 ROS
99283	1-3 Elements	1 ROS
99284	4+ Elements	2-9 ROS
99285	4+ Elements	10+ ROS

*Document 10 individual ROS pertinent negative or positive or documented "all others negative".

Physical Exam (PE)

99281	Affected Area
99282	Affected Area +1 other
99283	Affected Area +1 other
99284	2-7 Areas – affected area in detail
99285	8+ Organ systems

Medical Decision Making (MDM)

Medical Decision Making is comprised of 3 elements. Each encounter must meet 2 of the 3 elements.

1. Number of Diagnosis and Treatment Options
 - a. Self-Limited Minor Problem – 99281
 - b. Established Problem Stable – 99282
 - c. Established problem Worsening – 99283

- d. New problem, no additional work-up – 99284
- e. New problem, additional work-up planned – 99285

2. Amount and/or Complexity of Data Reviewed

- a. 1 point for each of the following:
 - i. Ordering of clinical lab tests, radiology tests, or medicine test (EKG)
 - ii. Discussing tests with performing physician
 - iii. Decision to obtain history from additional source (old records, EMS, family)
- b. 2 points for each of the following:
 - i. Review and Summarization of old record or obtain history from someone other than patient
 - ii. Independent visualization of x-rays, EKG, or specimen

- 99281 – 1 point
- 99282 – 2 points
- 99283 – 3 points
- 99284 – 3 points
- 99285 – 4 points

3. Risk of Complications and/or morbidity or mortality – see graph below

Presenting Problem	Diagnostic Tests	Management Options	Risk	Level
1 self-limiting problem	Lab w/venipuncture X-ray EKG	Rest Gargles Superficial dressings	Minimal	99281
2 or more self-limiting problems 1 stable chronic illness Acute uncompleted illness/injury	Non-cardiovascular imaging studies Superficial needle biopsies	Over the counter drugs Minor px w/no risk factors IV Fluids w/out additives	Low	99282
1 or more chronic illness w/mild exacerbation 2 or more stable chronic illness Acute illness w/systemic symptoms	Cardiovascular imaging w/contrast Obtain fluid from body cavity	Prescription drug management Minor surgery w/risk factors Closed tx of fx or dislocation	Moderate	99283 99284
1 or more chronic illness w/severe exacerbation Acute or chronic illness post threat to life or function Change in neurologic status	Cardiovascular imaging w/contrast w/risk factors	Parenteral controlled substance Drug therapy requiring intensive monitoring Emergency major surgery	High	99285

Documentation Tips

- MDM drives the level for coding.
- Document the location, severity, context, signs & symptoms, modifying factor, quality, and timing for each encounter.
- For complex cases, documented 10+ ROS or all other negative. Difference between a level 4 and 5 is the ROS.
- Document all testing ordered.
- Document your independent review of any performed tests.
- Prescription drug management supports a level 99283.
- Parenteral controlled substance supports a level 99285.
- Change in mental status or suicidal/homicidal supports a level 5.
- New problem refers to the examiner. Since there is no distinction made between new vs established patients in the ED setting, all problems will be considered new to the ED provider.

Additional work-up includes admission, transfer, consults or further work-up planned for patients discharged.

Resource

- CMS 1995 Documentation Guidelines for Evaluation and Management Services
- <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNEdWebGuide/Downloads/95Docguidelines.pdf>