



Adverse Effects

There is a big difference in coding a patient with an adverse reaction to a medication versus a poisoning of a medication and it relies heavily on the details of HOW the medication was taken. It is important to be as specific as possible when you believe your patient is having an adverse effect of a medication, especially if it is the reason for admission. Was the medication prescribed to them? Was it taken at the correct dose and right route? The newsletter this month focuses on how a chart is coded to adverse effect and what details are important to document so the chart is coded appropriately.

Missed Opportunities	Clear Documentation
Drug-induced delirium	Toxic encephalopathy due to adverse effect of ciprofloxacin
Drug-related tachypnea	Acute respiratory distress syndrome caused by amiodarone toxicity, taken as prescribed
Diarrhea in the setting of chemo med	Diarrhea due to methotrexate, administered properly

Best Practice Documentation

when patient is having a side effect of a medication, please document:

1. Clearly linking the medication to effect
2. Cause of effect (overdose, under-dose, administered properly)
3. Treatment.

Did the patient take a half dose of their medication? Did the patient take an extra dose of their medication? Did the patient take their prescribed medication with an over the counter supplement causing an interaction? An **ADVERSE EFFECT** of a drug occurs when the drug has been correctly prescribed AND properly administered.

Is it a/an:

- Allergic reaction?
- Cumulative effect of drug (toxicity)?
- Synergistic reaction (enhancing the effect of another drug)?
- Idiosyncratic reaction?
- Hypersensitivity to a drug?
- Side effect?
- Paradoxical reaction (unexpected result/outcome)?
- Interaction between prescribed drugs?

If YES to any of the above, then it is an ADVERSE EFFECT



Quality Quadrant



Although listed as a potential side effect to some medications, acute encephalopathy is not an expected outcome and therefore should be documented if a patient develops confusion due to medication. If a medication is taken as prescribed and the patient develops acute encephalopathy, it is important to document which medication you believe is causing the encephalopathy. Please note whether it was taken as prescribed and the interventions you are performing such as discontinuing the medication, IVF to flush the system, sitter or bed alarm for safety, etc.