

Federally Qualified Health Center National Advisory Board and Providers Work Together to Identify Social Determinants of Health



The Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) National Advisory Board for the AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of underserved communities by providing strategic guidance, advocacy, and leadership for federally qualified health center leaders nationwide.

Part of our mission is to share expert guidance on emerging trends and best practices in health care delivery to support FQHCs and the AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies in succeeding at improving health outcomes in today's rapidly changing health care environment. Bringing awareness and providing tools to overcome obstacles that prevent health equity, such as social determinants of health (SDOH), align with this mission.

Social determinants of health and FQHCs

What are social determinants of health?

The part of our mission that focuses on building healthy communities goes beyond clinical care. More than 80% of a person's health is tied to factors other than clinical care. These factors, known as social determinants of health, are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.^{1,2}

What is the impact of SDOH?

The FQHC National Advisory Board understands the importance of using technology in addressing social determinants of health. These underlying drivers of health impact every part of our physical, mental, and social well-being. When they work against someone or are left unaddressed, they create health inequities – which lead to worse outcomes and more expensive care. By collecting data and addressing SDOH, we can improve overall health outcomes and reduce health disparities.

How to get started collecting SDOH data

FQHCs who serve our members are uniquely positioned to identify and address SDOH, and together we can customize person-centered programs to ensure that our members have the critical support and services they need so they can make important lifestyle changes and lead healthier, more productive lives.

Any member of a person's care team can collect SDOH data during any encounter.

1. Sanne Magnan, "Social Determinants of Health 101 for Health Care: Five Plus Five," *NAM Perspectives*, Discussion Paper, National Academy of Medicine, October 9, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.31478/201710c>.

2. "Social Determinants of Health," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September 15, 2023, https://www.cdc.gov/public-health-gateway/php/about/social-determinants-of-health.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/sdoh/index.html



- This includes providers, social workers, community health workers, case managers, patient navigators, and nurses.
- Data can be collected at intake through health risk assessments, screening tools, person-provider interaction, and individual self-reporting.

Providers should choose a tool to capture SDOH data that works for your practice. An example is the Protocol for Responding to & Assessing Patients’ Assets, Risks, and Experiences (PRAPARE) tool, a nationally standardized and stakeholder-driven tool. When integrated into a provider’s EHR, the tool’s templates automatically map PRAPARE responses to ICD-10 Z codes.

When you submit claims, please add the appropriate supplemental ICD-10 diagnosis codes (Z codes) that identify SDOH.

AmeriHealth Caritas uses Z codes to assist in taking care of our members and closing gaps related to SDOH needs. SDOH-related Z codes ranging from Z55 to Z65 are the ICD-10-CM encounter reason codes used to document SDOH data (e.g., housing, food insecurity, and transportation).

Z code categories			
Z55	Problems related to education and literacy	Z60	Problems related to social environment
Z56	Problems related to employment and unemployment	Z62	Problems related to upbringing
Z57	Occupational exposure to risk factors	Z63	Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances
Z58	Problems related to physical environment	Z64	Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances
Z59	Problems related to housing and economic circumstances	Z65	Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances

This list is subject to revisions and additions to improve alignment with SDOH data elements.

Additional details and information about Z codes and the importance of using them can be found at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/zcodes-infographic.pdf> and <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/cms-2023-omh-z-code-resource.pdf>.

With your help, AmeriHealth Caritas will have actionable data and be able to respond to our members’ unmet needs.

NOTE: SDOH should not be used as the admitting or principal diagnosis.