

Clarification of Primary Brain Surgery Codes

Background: Back in June 2008, the CoC took steps to correct the widespread misinterpretation of the FORDS Primary Brain Surgery codes. **The problematic codes are discussed below with coding clarifications provided.** Registries that have NOT applied these codes correctly or consistently were advised by the CoC to review their brain surgery cases with primary site surgery codes of **40 or 55** diagnosed since FORDS was implemented in 2003, and make any necessary corrections.

CODES 20-30 are coded for the **resection of a tumor, lesion or mass** within the brain.

- MOST PRIMARY BRAIN SURGERY SHOULD BE CODED USING THESE CODES

- A **subtotal/partial resection** of ONLY the brain tumor, lesion or mass **is coded to 21**

- A **gross total resection** of ONLY the brain tumor, lesion or mass **is coded to 30**

- **If all you know is that the brain tumor, lesion or mass was removed** (i.e. *unknown if tumor, lesion or mass was completely removed*), **it should be coded to 20**

CODES 40 & 55 are coded **ONLY** when a **PARTIAL OR COMPLETE LOBECTOMY OF THE BRAIN** is performed to remove the tumor, lesion or mass.

-THIS IS A RARE OCCURRENCE and should be **verified** by careful review of the *"GROSS" section of the pathology report or the operative report*