



# CDI Education - Depression

## MDD (major depressive disorder)

Major depression or Major Depressive Disorder as defined in the DSM-5 is a significant co-morbidity for many inpatients.

Physicians have the opportunity to document the severity of depression especially whether it is POA or by history. However, a diagnosis of simply “depression” (in remission or not), even if described as “severe”, is considered by Medicare as only a minor symptom.

A diagnosis of MDD (of any degree) has major severity-of-illness implications. A patient showing acute depression needs a Psychiatric diagnosis because the cause may be complicated by medications, delirium, or simply the hypo-activity of hospitalization.

However, a simple history of major depressive disorder be both a co-morbidity (CC) and a hierarchical condition category (HCC) score for many inpatients if properly documented.

1. Pinzon, MD, FACP, *ACP Hospitalist* October 2014
- 2: “Coding for Major Depressive Disorder”, AAPC 2013
3. *Age and Aging*, Volume 41 March 2012
4. Pinson & Tang, *CDI Pocket Guide*, ACDIS HC Pro 2018

## Documenting a History of Depression

**Major depressive disorder, recurrent, in partial remission**

**Major depressive disorder, recurrent, in full remission**

Partial or full remission would be difficult to diagnose in the acute inpatient hospital setting. Full remission requires 2 months with no sign of depression. Partial remission means that the depression is still present but is not caused by some other external cause.

**Major depressive disorder, recurrent, in remission, unspecified**

A classification of in remission means that the patient has had episodes in the past but has been free from symptoms for several months. (This category can still be used even if the patient is receiving treatment—such as antidepressants-- to reduce the risk of further episodes.)