

## **Interactive complexity codes**

**Background:** Interactive complexity (90785) is an add-on code specific to psychiatric services that refers to communication difficulties during the psychiatric encounter.

### **Important information regarding interactive complexity codes:**

- Add-on codes should be reported in conjunction with specified primary procedure codes; add-on codes may not be reported alone.
- The interactive complexity add-on code (90785) cannot be used with crisis intervention (90839/90840) or family psychotherapy (90846/90847).
- When performed with psychotherapy, interactive complexity relates only to the increased intensity of the psychotherapy service; it does not change the time of the psychotherapy service.
- Documentation of interactive complexity should include:
  - A record of base service delivery code(s), all coding requirements and the interactive complexity code in the same note.
  - Evidence within the multicode service note indicating the specific category of complexity present during the intervention.
- Examples of appropriate uses of interactive complexity add-on code 90785:
  - Maladaptive communication among participants that complicates the delivery of care
  - Caregiver emotions or behaviors that interfere with the treatment plan
  - Evidence or disclosure of a sentinel event or mandated report to a third party and initiation of discussion of the event or report with patient and other participants
  - Use of play equipment, physical devices, interpreter or translator to overcome barriers to interaction with a patient who is not fluent in the same language — or who has not developed or has lost language skills

### **What does this mean for me?**

- You should ensure that the interactive complexity add-on code is used appropriately as it relates to difficulties encountered during the psychiatric procedure.
- You should bill this code when it meets the specific criteria for interactive complexity.
- Please note that excessive use of this code could result in additional medical record review and potentially lead to recoupment of payment if the medical record does not support use of the code.

### **What if I need assistance?**

If you have questions about this communication or need assistance, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call Provider Services toll free at 1-800-454-3730.