

DOCUMENTATION REFERENCE CARD

MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER

Documentation Considerations

- **Document episode type:**
 - Single
 - Recurrent

- **Classify the severity (PHQ-9 scores can be valuable):**
 - Mild
 - Moderate
 - Severe

- **Identify remission status:**
 - Partial
 - Full

Diagnosis Considerations

- **Document and code any associated psychotic features**

- **Identify the specific type of depression (avoid unspecified diagnosis)**

- **Document and code any causal relationships with associated manifestations**

- **Asymptomatic patients considered “in remission” rather than “history of depression”**

Additional Considerations

- **Maintenance medications control symptoms but condition still exists**

- **Document efficacy of current therapy regimen**

- **Identify length of symptoms**

- **Document and code any mood disorder to highest specificity at least annually**



This information is issued on behalf of Highmark Blue Shield and its affiliated Blue companies, which are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Highmark Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Shield and certain of its affiliated Blue companies serve Blue Shield members in 21 counties in central Pennsylvania and 13 counties in northeastern New York. As a partner in joint operating agreements, Highmark Blue Shield also provides services in conjunction with a separate health plan in southeastern Pennsylvania. Highmark Inc. or certain of its affiliated Blue companies also serve Blue Cross Blue Shield members in 29 counties in western Pennsylvania, 13 counties in northeastern Pennsylvania, the state of West Virginia plus Washington County, Ohio, the state of Delaware and 8 counties in western New York. All references to Highmark in this document are references to Highmark Inc. d/b/a Highmark Blue Shield and/or to one or more of its affiliated Blue companies.

NOTE: This tool is intended to assist with documentation only and not intended to take the place of clinical analysis. Information regarding any law or regulation does not constitute legal or tax advice and is subject to change based upon the issuance of new guidance and/or change in laws or regulations. Reference Official ICD-10-CM coding guidelines and manuals or electronic medical coding software for accurate ICD-10-CM codes and specificity.