

Case Study:

Inappropriate multi-coding

(Orthopaedic Surgery – Foot and Ankle surgery)

Summary




- 6 TOSP codes were submitted in a MediShield Life claim for (a) bilateral ankle arthroscopies, (b) ankle ligament reconstructions, (c) foot osteotomies and corrections performed in a single surgical setting.
- Panel assessed inappropriate multi-coding:
 - Arthroscopy should not have been coded separately as it was part of the main procedure for ligament reconstruction (SB702A); coding for latter would suffice.
 - Multiple foot osteotomies should not have been coded as lower limb corrective surgery (SB801B) since a code exists for the former (SB727F).

Case Details

- Patient in the 30s was diagnosed with (a) bilateral severe bunion deformities with flatfeet and collapsed arches; and (b) bilateral ankle pain and instability with laxity.
- Surgeon performed (a) bilateral ankle arthroscopies, (b) ankle ligament reconstructions, (c) foot osteotomies and corrections. A MediShield Life claim was submitted with 6 TOSP codes for this surgical episode.

Claim Adjudication Outcome

Summary of TOSP Codes

TOSP Codes Submitted by Doctor				Decision by Panel
S/N	Code	Description	Table	
1	SB801B	Bone (Lower Limb), Deformities, Corrective Surgery with Internal Fixation with or without Fluoroscopy	5C	 Should code 2x SB727F* instead
2	SB801B		5C	
3	SB702A	Ankle, Ligamentous Instability, Reconstruction of Ligaments	5A	 Appropriate
4	SB702A		5A	
5	SB705A	Ankle, Therapeutic Arthroscopy	4A	 Inappropriate
6	SB705A		4A	

* SB727F (5C) - Foot, Multiple Foot Osteotomies

The Panel assessed the following components to be inappropriate:

- 2x SB801B:** These codes should have been coded as 2 x SB727F instead, which are more appropriate to describe the multiple foot osteotomies done.
- 2x SB705A:** These codes should not have been coded separately as they are already part of SB702A.

Key Learning Points

- Doctors should claim under TOSP codes which best describe the procedures performed.
- Doctors should not claim under multiple codes for individual surgical steps which are already part of a surgery described by a single TOSP code.
- Investigations will be conducted in respect of doctors who certify inappropriate claim(s), and enforcement action will be taken in respect of any non-compliances found. Egregious or repeated non-compliances may result in the suspension or revocation of the doctor's MediSave and MediShield Life accreditation.