

Case Study:

Inappropriate coding

(Orthopaedic Surgery – Total Knee Replacement)



Summary

- 2 TOSP codes were submitted in a MediShield Life claim for (a) right total knee replacement and (b) soft tissue release, both performed in a single surgical episode.
- Panel assessed the coding to be inappropriate:
 - A standard primary total knee replacement was performed. The correct TOSP code should have been SB810K (6A). There was no augmentation or bone grafting performed to justify the use of SB716K (6B).
 - Soft tissue release is a routine part of a standard total knee replacement procedure and should not be coded separately.

Case Details

- Patient in the 60s complained of severe and progressive right knee pain following a fall which did not improve with conservative management.
- Patient was diagnosed as having right knee osteoarthritis and had right total knee replacement with soft tissue release performed. A MediShield Life claim was submitted with 2 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	SB716K	Knee, Various Lesions, Primary Total Joint Replacement (Unilateral) with augmentation, requiring extra implants or bone grafts, open/MIS/navigated	6B	✗ Should code as SB810K (6A) instead
2	SA711S	Soft Tissue (Lower Limb), Contracture, Major Release	4A	✗ Inappropriate to use

The Panel assessed the following components to be inappropriate:

- SB716K:** This TOSP is for complex knee replacement with augments, bone grafting or extra implants.
 - Patient had a standard primary knee replacement done, and the appropriate code should have been SB810K (6A) - *Knee, Various Lesions, Primary Total Joint Replacement (Unilateral)*.
 - There was no significant lesion requiring bone graft noted in the pre-op radiological investigations nor was there any structural bone graft or implant augmentation seen in the post-op x-rays.
- SA711S:** This TOSP should not have been submitted as soft tissue release is part of a standard total knee replacement and should not be coded separately.

Key Learning Points

- Doctors should claim under TOSP codes which best describe the procedures performed.
- Doctors should not claim under multiple codes the 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.