

ICD-10 mental health codes

The codes counsellors and psychologists use most, in plain language.

The International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision (ICD-10) code on a claim tells the medical scheme why the client was seen. Use the most specific code that your assessment supports and your scope of practice allows.

Which codes can I use?

Registered Counsellors screen, do basic assessment and offer supportive interventions, but do not diagnose. Use the **Z-codes** on this page.

Psychologists use the Z-codes where they describe the reason for the visit, and the **F-codes** on page 2 where they have made a diagnosis.

Z-codes: counselling, couples and life circumstances

Code	ICD-10 title	In plain language
Z63.0	Problems in relationship with spouse or partner	Couples, marital and premarital difficulties.
Z63.1	Problems in relationship with parents and in-laws	Conflict with parents or in-laws.
Z63.4	Disappearance and death of family member	Grief and bereavement after losing a family member.
Z63.5	Disruption of family by separation and divorce	Separation and divorce, and how they affect the family.
Z63.7	Other stressful life events affecting family and household	Stressful events that affect the whole household.
Z63.8	Other specified problems related to primary support group	Other family or couple problems you can name.
Z60.0	Problems of adjustment to life-cycle transitions	Adjusting to a major life change.
Z56.0 to Z56.7	Problems related to employment and unemployment	Career and work problems, such as job change (Z56.1) or discord with boss and workmates (Z56.4).
Z73.0	Burn-out	Exhaustion from work or caring.
Z73.3	Stress, not elsewhere classified	General stress with no more specific code.
Z73.5	Social role conflict, not elsewhere classified	Conflict between roles, for example work and family.
Z65.4	Victim of crime and terrorism	Support after being the victim of a crime.
Z70.0 to Z70.9	Counselling related to sexual attitude, behaviour and orientation	Sex and intimacy counselling, for example Z70.8 Other sex counselling.
Z71.8	Other specified counselling	Counselling for a clear purpose that no other code covers. Check how each scheme treats it.
Z71.9	Counselling, unspecified	The fallback. Use only when no more specific code applies.
Z50.4	Psychotherapy, not elsewhere classified	Psychotherapy as the reason for the visit.

F-codes: diagnosed mental and behavioural disorders

For psychologists, where a diagnosis has been made. Registered Counsellors do not use these codes.

MOOD

Code	ICD-10 title	In plain language
F31	Bipolar affective disorder	Episodes of mania or hypomania and depression.
F32.0 to F32.2	Mild, moderate and severe depressive episode (without psychotic symptoms)	A single depressive episode, graded by severity.
F32.9	Depressive episode, unspecified	Use only when severity is not known.
F33.0 to F33.9	Recurrent depressive disorder	Repeated depressive episodes. The fourth character shows the current episode.
F34.1	Dysthymia	Long-lasting, lower-grade low mood.

ANXIETY, OBSESSIONS AND STRESS

Code	ICD-10 title	In plain language
F40.1	Social phobias	Fear of social situations.
F41.0	Panic disorder [episodic paroxysmal anxiety]	Recurrent panic attacks.
F41.1	Generalized anxiety disorder	Persistent, widespread worry.
F41.2	Mixed anxiety and depressive disorder	Anxiety and depression together, neither clearly dominant.
F42	Obsessive-compulsive disorder	Obsessions or compulsions.
F43.0	Acute stress reaction	A short-term reaction to an overwhelming event.
F43.1	Post-traumatic stress disorder	Lasting symptoms after a traumatic event.
F43.2	Adjustment disorders	Distress after a significant life change.

EATING, SLEEP, PERSONALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND SUBSTANCES

Code	ICD-10 title	In plain language
F50.0 / F50.2	Anorexia nervosa / Bulimia nervosa	Eating disorders. F50.9 is Eating disorder, unspecified.
F51.0	Nonorganic insomnia	Insomnia without a physical cause.
F60.3	Emotionally unstable personality disorder	F60.9 is Personality disorder, unspecified.
F90.0	Disturbance of activity and attention	Attention deficit and hyperactivity.
F84.0 / F84.5	Childhood autism / Asperger's syndrome	Autism spectrum presentations.
F10.-	Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol	The fourth character shows the type, for example dependence.

Six coding habits

- **Code what you assessed.** The code must be supported by your session notes and sit within your scope of practice.
- **Be specific.** Use a more specific code over an "unspecified" one when your assessment supports it.
- **Expect validation.** Schemes check codes, including age and gender rules. A wrong code can get the claim rejected.
- **Tell clients.** The code goes to the scheme and becomes part of their record. Say so in your consent form.
- **Know the Prescribed Minimum Benefits.** Some conditions, such as major depression and bipolar disorder, must be paid from risk benefits and not the Medical Savings Account. Check the Council for Medical Schemes list.
- **Check and re-check.** Schemes validate against the Master Industry Table. Codes and rules change, so re-check yearly.

Last checked: 2 October 2026. Titles from the World Health Organization ICD-10 (Chapters V and XXI). Scope: Regulations GNR 993 of 2008. Claim rules: Council for Medical Schemes and South African Medical Association guidance. General information only; confirm against the current Master Industry Table and your scheme. Not approved or endorsed by the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

ICD-10 CODES AND TARIFFS

Tired of doing this manually?

Try *Wholistic Private Practice*

A cheat sheet only goes so far. In **Wholistic Private Practice**, mental health codes are already grouped the way you actually use them, so you never scroll past tropical diseases to find Z71.9.

- **Searchable ICD-10 codes for mental health practice**, organised the way psychologists and Registered Counsellors look for them.
- **Code and tariff picked in the invoice**. Choose the scheme and the tariff, and the invoice fills in the rate, the ICD-10 code and the co-payment split.
- **Rates kept up to date for you**, so you are never billing from an old rate sheet.

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