



**American Hospital
Association™**

Advancing Health in America

The Journey to a Healthier Wisconsin

Use of Z-Codes

Findings from the Multi-State Data Collaboration

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Z-codes

- Z codes represent reasons for encounters. A corresponding procedure code must accompany a Z code if a procedure is performed. They are provided for occasions when circumstances other than a disease, injury or external cause classifiable to categories A00-Y89 are recorded as 'diagnoses' or 'problems'. This can arise in two main ways:
 - (a) When a person who may or may not be sick encounters the health services for some specific purpose, such as to receive limited care or service for a current condition, to donate an organ or tissue, to receive prophylactic vaccination (immunization), or to discuss a problem which is in itself not a disease or injury.
 - (b) **When some circumstance or problem is present which influences the person's health status but is not in itself a current illness or injury.**

Z55-Z65

Persons with potential health hazards related to socioeconomic and psychosocial circumstances

- Eight broad codes with 97 sub-codes

ICD-10	Description	Number of Sub-Codes
Z55	Problems related to education and literacy	7
Z56	Problems related to employment and unemployment	12
Z57	Occupational exposure to risk factors	12
Z59	Problems related to housing and economic circumstances	10
Z60	Problems related to social environment	7
Z62	Problems related to upbringing	24
Z63	Other problems related to primary support group, including family circumstances	14
Z64	Problems related to certain psychosocial circumstances	3
Z65	Problems related to other psychosocial circumstances	8

Z55 Problems Related to Education and Literacy

- Z55.0 Illiteracy and low-level literacy
- Z55.1 Schooling unavailable or unattainable
- Z55.2 Failed school examinations
- Z55.3 Underachievement in school
- Z55.4 Educational maladjustment and discord with teachers and classmates
- Z55.8 Other problems related to education and literacy
- Z55.9 Problems related to education and literacy, unspecified

Z59 Problems related to housing and economic circumstances

- Z59.0 Homelessness
- Z59.1 Inadequate housing
- Z59.2 Discord with neighbors, lodgers and landlord
- Z59.3 Problems related to living in residential institution
- Z59.4 Lack of adequate food
- Z59.5 Extreme poverty
- Z59.6 Low income
- Z59.7 Insufficient social insurance and welfare support
- Z59.8 Other problems related to housing and economic circumstances
- Z59.9 Problem related to housing and economic circumstances, unspecified

Why Do We Care About Z-codes?

- They can help us identify and track health outcomes that may be related to SDOH
- They provide a standard data set for analysis across time and across providers
- We cannot change what we do not measure
- We cannot adjust for what we do not measure
- Payers and policy-makers are looking for ways to capture this information

The AHA Multi-State Data Collaboration (MSDC)

- State data collection and reporting programs are siloed
- MSDC is a true collaboration governed by agreed-upon terms of engagement and guardrails
- Each project has a charter and collaborators can choose to participate on a project-by-project basis
- Projects are identified and chosen by the collaborators
- Distributed computing using co-developed, standard algorithms and code – no sharing of patient-level data
- Each State participant agrees to allow all project participants to use that State's (aggregated) data
- AHA collects the output from each State participant, reviews, checks and compiles the results and creates a data file, Tableau workbook and briefing paper

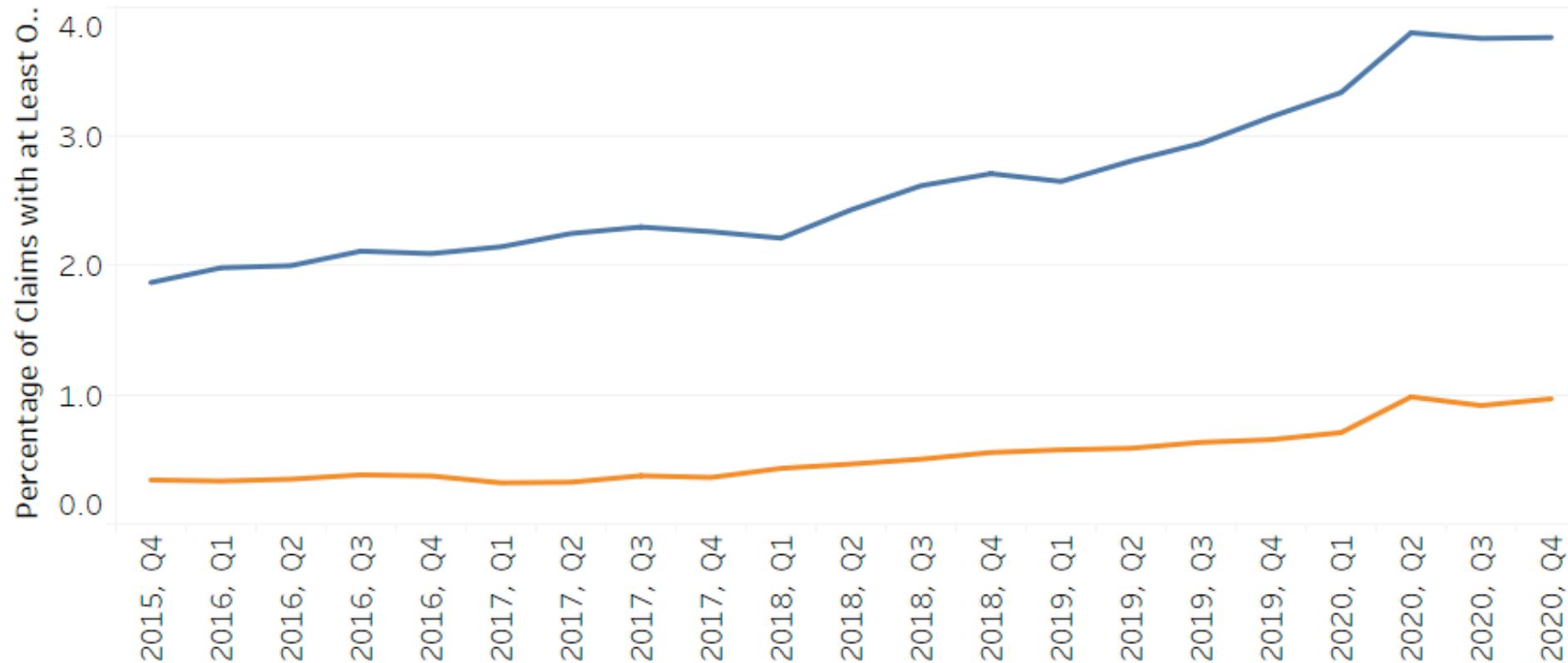
The MSDC Z-code Project

- Identify and evaluate patterns in Z code use
- Track Z code usage over time to evaluate improvements in adoption
- Evaluate potential usage of Z coded data for risk adjustment.
- Inform our members and policy-makers on the status of the field
- Assist our members be more pro-active with this data

MSDC Findings

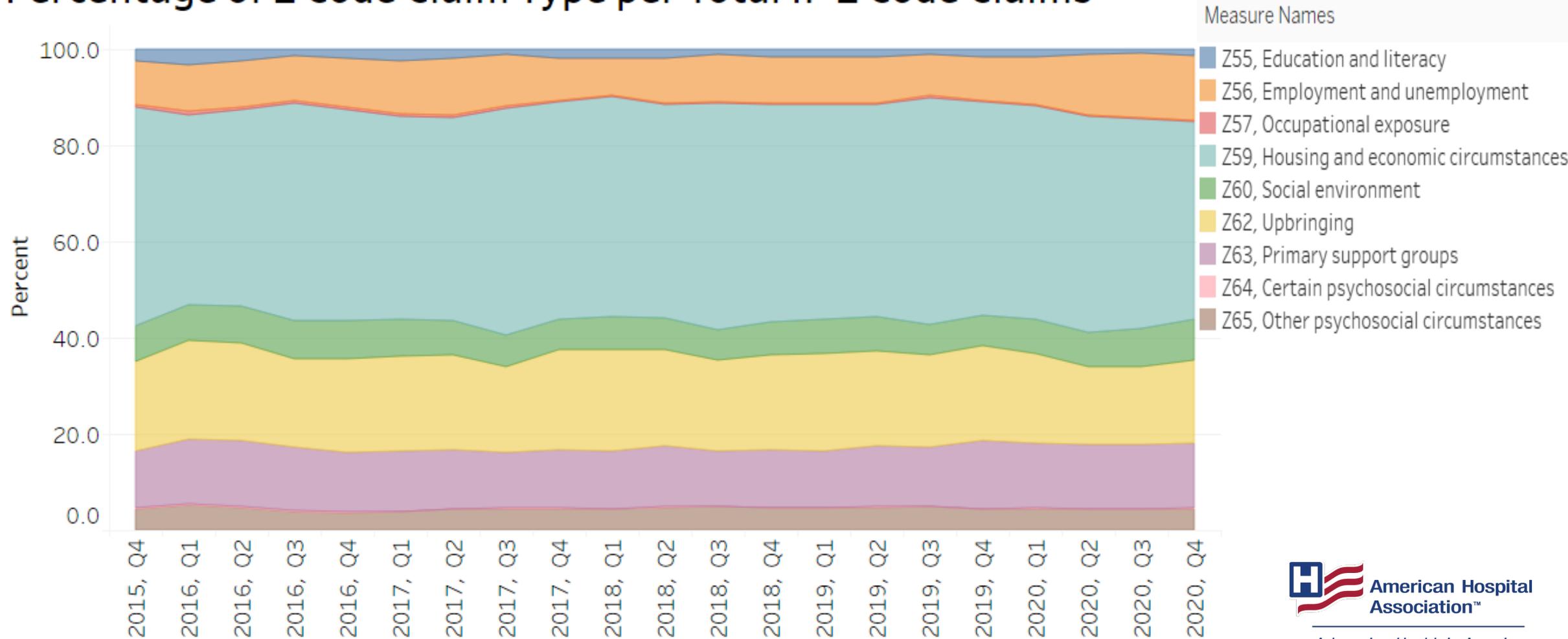
Overall Percentage of Claims with at Least One Z Code Aggregate of All States

Number of total claims divided by the number of claims with at least one Z code



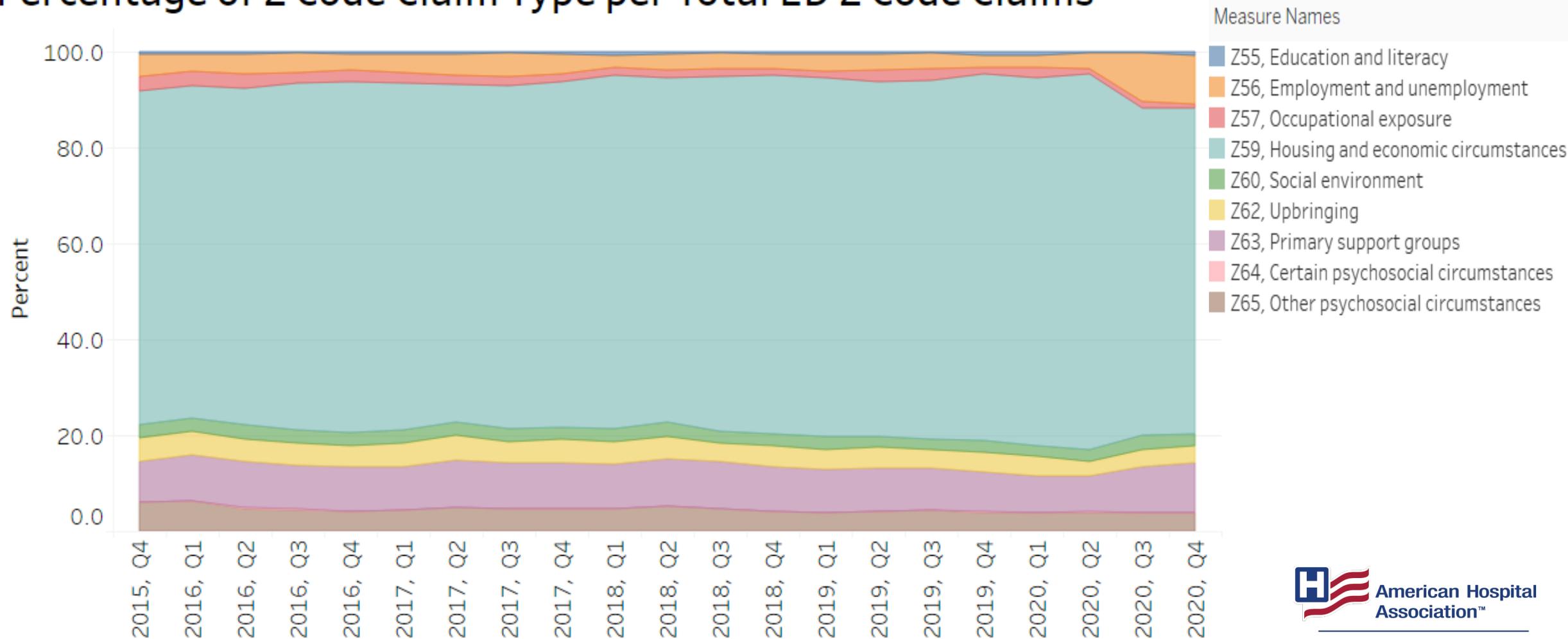
MSDC Findings

Percentage of Z Code Claim Type per Total IP Z Code Claims



MSDC Findings

Percentage of Z Code Claim Type per Total ED Z Code Claims



MSDC What's Next?

- Compile data to provide a guidepost as to what should be an good representation of the percentage of z-coded claims
- Get messaging out to our members as to the value and uses for z-codes
- Use this data as a baseline and measure for coding improvement
- Work with policy and advocacy teams to support use of z-codes for quality measurement adjustments
- Focus on codes are most likely to be used
- Work with AHA Coding Clinic to improve z-code descriptors

Questions, Comments, Suggestions

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