PCS Root Operations, and Approach Values

Character three in the PCS coding system reflects the root operation. The purpose of the root operation is to reflect the objective of the procedure. There are 31 values for the root operation. All value definitions, explanations and examples can be found in appendix A of the PCS codebook.

The values are arranged by similar attributes into 9 groups

Group 1 Root Operations That Take Out Some or All of a Body Part

Includes: Excision, Resection, Detachment, Destruction, and Extraction.

Of these, you may find the two that present the most challenges are excision and resection

Excision (Value B) is defined as cutting out or off, without replacement, a portion of a body part. Excision is coded when a portion of a body part is cut out or off using a sharp instrument Biopsies are excision procedures that are further identified by using the qualifier (7th character) of diagnostic. An exception to this is bone marrow and endometrial biopsies which are coded to extraction.

Resection (Value T) is defined as cutting out or off, without replacement, all of a body part. This involves all of a body part, or subdivision of a body part that had its own body part value.

Example – Refer to table **0FT**

0: Medical and Surgical (Section)

F: Hepatobiliary System and Pancreas (Body System)

T: Resection: cutting out or off, without replacement, all of a body part (Root Operation)

Body Part **4th Character**	**Approach** **5th Character**	**Device** **6th Character**	**Qualifier** **7th Character**
0 Liver **1 Liver, Right Lobe** **2 Liver Left Lobe** **4 Gallbladder** **G Pancreas**	**0** Open **4** Percutaneous Endoscopic	**Z** No Device	**Z** No Qualifier

Note that the Body Part values involving the liver are **0, 1 or 2**. In this example there are two subdivisions of the liver that have their own body part value. The complete removal of the left lobe of the liver would be coded to OFT2. It could not be coded as an excision of the liver as the left lobe has it own body part value.

Group 2 Root Operations That Take Out Solids/Fluids/Gases from a Body Part

Includes: drainage, extirpation, and fragmentation

Extirpation is defined as taking or cutting out solid matter from a body part. It reflects a range of procedures where the body part itself is not the focus of the procedure, instead, the objective is to remove solid material such as a foreign body, or an abnormal byproduct of a biological function which includes the examples of a thrombus, or calculus, from the body part.

Group 3 Root Operations Involving Cutting or Separation Only

Includes: division and release

To differentiate between these two remember

Division (Value 8) = cutting the body part

Release (Value N) = freeing of the body part. Release procedures are coded to the body part being freed. The procedure can be performed on the area around a body part, on the attachments to a body part, or between subdivisions of a body part

Group 4 Root Operations That Put In/Put Back or Move Some/All of a Body Part

Includes: transplantation, reattachment, transfer, and reposition

Reposition (Value S) reflects procedures for moving a body part to a new location. The range of reposition procedures includes moving a body part to its normal location or moving a body part to a new location to enhance its ability to function. An example would be reduction of a displaced fracture. This is coded to the root operation reposition, the application of a cast or splint in conjunction with the reposition procedure is not coded separately as it is considered integral to the procedure.

Group 5 Root Operations That Alter the Diameter/Route of a Tubular Body Part

Includes: restriction, occlusion, dilation, and bypass

Bypass (Value 1) reflects Altering the route of passage of the contents of a tubular body part.

Bypass procedures are coded by identifying the body part bypassed "from" and the body part bypassed "to." The body part (4th character) specifies the body part bypassed from, and the qualifier (7th character) specifies the body part bypassed to. Coronary artery bypass procedures are coded differently, the body part (4th character) identifies the number of coronary arteries bypassed to, and the qualifier (7th character) specifies the vessel bypassed from.

Group 6 Root Operations That Always Involve a Device

Includes: change, insertion, removal, replacement, revision, and supplement

Insertion (Value H) reflects procedures where the sole objective is to put in a device without doing anything else to a body part. Examples of procedures typical of those you would code to Insertion include putting in a vascular catheter, a pacemaker lead, or a tissue expander.

Replacement (Value R) reflects putting in or on, biological or synthetic material that physically takes the place and/or function of all or a portion of a body part.

Change (Value 2) is defined as taking out or off a device from a body part and putting back an identical or similar device in or on the same body part without cutting or puncturing the skin or a mucous membrane. All change procedures are coded using the approach of external as the definition states "without cutting or puncturing the skin. It reflects only those procedures where a similar device is exchanged without making a new incision or puncture.

Group 7 Root Operations Involving Examination Only

Includes: inspection and maps

Map (Value K) describes locating the route of passage of electrical impulses and/or locating functional areas in a body part. There are two body systems applicable to map. There are the Central Nervous System and Heart and Great Vessels.

Group 8 Root Operations That Define Other Repairs

Includes: control and repair

Control (Value 3) is defined as stopping, or attempting to stop, postprocedural or other acute bleeding. If an attempt to control bleeding is unsuccessful, and to stop the bleeding requires performing a more definitive root operation, then the more definitive root operation is coded instead of control.

Repair (Value Q) is used only when the method to accomplish the repair is cannot be reflected using another root operation.

Group 9 Root Operations that Define Other Objectives

Includes: alteration, fusion, and creation.

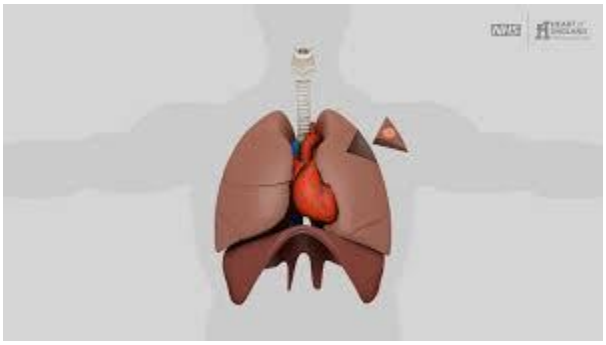
Alteration (Value 0) is defined as Modifying the natural anatomic structure of a body part without affecting the function of the body part. The purpose of this procedure is to improve appearance. Some surgical procedures can be performed for either medical or cosmetic purposes, coding alteration requires diagnostic confirmation that the surgery is in
only performed to improve appearance. If the procedure is done for a medical condition, the appropriate root operation is coded.

It is critical that the coder correctly identify the appropriate root operation to adequately describe the procedure. Please review the PCS Official Coding Guideline A11, it states:

> "Many of the terms used to construct PCS codes are defined

> within the system. It is the coder's responsibility to determine what the documentation in the medical record equates to in the PCS definitions. The physician is not expected to use the terms used in PCS code descriptions, nor is the coder required to query the physician when the correlation between the documentation and the defined PCS terms is clear. "

An example of the application of this guideline could be the procedural statement of wedge resection of the lung. The statement indicates that a resection was performed but it is modified by the word wedge. A wedge resection is a procedure that removes a small wedge (triangle) piece of tissue as illustrated below



http://www.thoracicsurgery.co.uk/segementectomy-and-wedge-resection/

Even though the word resection is used in the procedural statement it is clear that the procedure should be coded as an excision as it does not meet the PCS definition of resection.

Character 5 Approach

The fifth character of a PCS code describes the approach, or the technique used to reach the operative site. The approach definitions can be found in Appendix C of your PCS codebook. The seven-approach values applicable to the Medical Surgical Section are

External (Value X) -This is used to describe the approach for procedures performed directly on the skin or mucous membrane and procedures performed indirectly by the application of external force through the skin or mucous membrane. An example of an external approach would be a closed reduction of a fracture.

Open (Value 0) – This is used to describe the approach for procedures performed by cutting though the skin, mucous membrane, and any other body layer necessary to expose the site of the procedure. An example would be an open appendectomy or abdominal hysterectomy.

Percutaneous (Value 3) - This is used to describe the approach for procedures performed by entry, by puncture or minor incision, of instrumentation through the skin or mucous membrane and any other

body layers necessary to reach the site of the procedure. Examples include needle biopsies, or liposuction procedures

Percutaneous Endoscopic (Value 4) - This is used to describe the approach for procedures by entry, by puncture or minor incision, of instrumentation through the skin or mucous membrane and any other body layers necessary to reach and visualize the site of the procedure. An example of this would be any procedures accomplished with an arthroscope or laparoscope.

Via Natural or Artificial Opening (Value 7) - This is used to describe the approach for procedures by entry of instrumentation through a natural or artificial external opening to reach the site of the procedure. Examples of this would be an endotracheal intubation or D&C.

Via Natural or Artificial Opening Endoscopic (Value 8) - This is used to describe the approach for procedures by entry of instrumentation through a natural or artificial external opening to reach and visualize the site of the procedure. Examples of this would be procedures using a bronchoscope.

Via Natural or Artificial Opening Endoscopic with Percutaneous Endoscopic Assistance (Value F) - This is used to describe the approach for procedures by entry of instrumentation through a natural or artificial external opening and entry, by puncture or minor incision, of instrumentation through the skin or mucous membrane and any other body layers necessary to aid in the performance of the procedure. An example of this could be a laparoscopic-assisted vaginal hysterectomy.

There is an approach decision tree in the content of this unit. I strongly recommend you save and refer to it as you begin to work through the coding process.
