Garbage code details

Cause of death (COD) indicators will reflect reality if they are based on qualified data, which, however, do not always provide accurate record of the cause. Errors in correctly identifying and coding the underlying cause of death are known as ‘garbage codes’, first defined in the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study, to indicate that they are of limited value for public health policy and planning which requires accurate information on the underlying COD. (49)

The garbage codes for injuries were defined according to study GBD-2015 (8, 11, 24), (ICD-10) (50) and ANACONDA-3.9 (Analysis of Causes of National Deaths for Action) (51) was used to classify them according to severity. Four severity levels of GC are defined depending on how serious their impact is for misleading public policy (very high (level 1), high (Level 2), medium (Level 3), low (Level 4).

The GC for injuries were grouped according to study GBD-2015, ICD-10, into:

- road injuries unspecified (V87.0, V87.1, V87.4-V88.1, V88.4-V89.9); transport injuries unspecified (V99); unintentional injuries unspecified (X59); injuries by interpersonal violence unspecified (Y09); injuries by undetermined intention (Y10-Y34). It is noteworthy another group of injuries by garbage code, considered non-priority to investigation: W76, X40-X44, X47.0, X49, Y85-Y86, Y87.1-Y87.9, Y89. O form for IDEC was used to investigate deaths from natural causes (A00-R99) with suspected injuries and injury-valid codes for clarification and/or confirmation of cause, as well as the chapter 19 (S00-T99).

The following causes were considered valid codes for injuries, especially in reclassification:

- pedestrian road injuries (V87.0, V87.1, V87.4-V88.1; V88.4-V89.9), cyclist road injuries (V10-V19), motorcyclist road injuries (V20-V29), motor vehicle road injuries (V30-V79, V87.2, V87.3), other road injuries (V05, V80-V86), other transport injuries (V88.2, V88.3, V90-V98), unintentional injuries (fall: W00-W19 and all others: W20-W75, W77-X39, X45-X46, X47.1-X47.8, X48; X50-X58), self-harm (X60-X84), interpersonal violence (X85-Y08), other injuries (Y35; Y40-Y84).

Severity levels of GC are defined under four categories depending on how serious their impact is for misleading public policy because the true underlying cause of death (ANACONDA 3.9):

- very high, could belong to more than one broad cause group (communicable disease, non-communicable, injury). Serious impact, they could potentially alter our understanding of the pattern of COD;
• high, is likely could belong to one of the three broad group. Substantial impact, they do not alter our understanding of the broad composition of causes of death, however, affect our knowledge of leading COD;
• medium, is likely to be one within the same ICD chapter, however, without specifying the exact type of cause within the chapter. Important impact.
• low, is likely to be confined to a single disease or injury category, limited impact. They will generally be much less important for public policy, although they do matter for the comprehensive and detailed measurement of COD patterns required by the GBD Study.

Note 1:
(a) Includes codes: V87.0; V87.1; V87.4-V88.1; V88.4-V89.9.
(b) Includes codes: W76; X40-X44; X47.0; X49; Y85-Y86; Y87.1-Y87.9; Y89.
(c) Includes codes: W00-W75; W77-X39; X45-X46; X47.1-X47.8; X48; X50-X58.

Note 2
(d) Includes codes: V87.0; V87.1; V87.4-V88.1; V88.4-V89.9 (Road injuries unspecified); V99 (Transport injuries unspecified); X59 (Unintentional injuries unspecified); Y09 (interpersonal violence unspecified); W76; X40-X44; X47.0; X49; Y85-Y86; Y87.1-Y87.9; Y89 (Other injuries by garbage code).