



# Western Australian Coding Rule

## 0916/06 Non-small cell lung carcinoma vs adenocarcinoma

### Q.

When a lung cancer is documented as non-small cell lung carcinoma (adenocarcinoma), which morphology should be coded?

### A.

Lung carcinomas can be divided into two main types: small cell lung carcinoma (SCLC) and non-small cell lung carcinoma (NSCLC). As the name suggests, NSCLC refers to a group of lung carcinomas which are not small cell. The most common types of NSCLC are squamous cell carcinoma, large cell carcinoma and adenocarcinoma. Clinically, adenocarcinoma is a more specific type of NSCLC.

Additionally, ACS 0233 *Morphology* states “If a morphological diagnosis contains two histological terms which have different M codes, select the highest number as it is usually more specific”.

M8140/3 *Adenocarcinoma NOS* is a higher number than M8046/3 *Non-small cell carcinoma*. It is also clinically a more specific diagnosis than NSCLC. Therefore, following the instruction in ACS 0233, M8140/3 *Adenocarcinoma NOS* should be assigned when ‘non-small cell lung carcinoma (adenocarcinoma)’ is documented.

### DECISION

**Following the instruction in ACS 0233, M8140/3 *Adenocarcinoma NOS* should be assigned when both non-small cell lung carcinoma and adenocarcinoma are documented.**

[Effective 21 Sep 2016, ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS 9<sup>th</sup> Ed.]