Ultrasonic Wound Debridement

**Issue:** Misonix Ultrasonic Wound Debridement System utilizes an ultrasonic metallic probe and a water irrigation system to debride wounds. This procedure is currently captured by code 86.28, Nonexcisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn. The manufacturer has requested that indexing and tabular entries be changed so that this procedure would be captured by code 86.22, Excisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn instead of code 86.28.

**New Technology Application?** No

**Food & Drug Administration (FDA) approval:** Yes, the Misonix SonicOne contact wound debridement system has been cleared under 510K #: K050776.

**Background:** Contact ultrasonic wound debridement systems use ultrasonically energized instruments and utilize water irrigation for tissue excision. The ultrasonic probe is brought into direct contact with the tissue targeted for debridement. The probe’s vibratory motion acts as a micro jackhammer, creating local cavitation and hydrodynamic effects that dissect tissue at the point of contact. The manufacturer states that the system is applicable for tissue excision outside the wound margin, as well as within it. However, the manufacturer also emphasizes that an advantage of this system is that “viable tissue structures are more resistant to destruction” and the system “flushes the wound of fibrin deposits...while preserving the granulation tissue.” Advice in both the American Hospitals Association’s Coding Clinic for ICD-9-CM, as well as indexing and tabular entries in ICD-9-CM for water scalpel (jet) procedures, leads to a code assignment of 86.28. This Ultrasonic Wound Debridement System is also captured by code 86.28. The manufacturer disagrees with this code assignment and believes that this technology performs an excisional debridement.

**Coding options:**
- **Option 1.** Continue capturing Misonix Ultrasonic Wound Debridement System and other ultrasonic mechanical debridement systems through code 86.28, Nonexcisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn.
  
  Add an index entry and a tabular entry under code 86.28 for Ultrasonic mechanical debridement to further clarify this code assignment. As indicated above, the process is not typically used to excise block elements that can be available for examination but to pulverize (ablate) devitalized tissue and debris into small particles for removal by the irrigation fluid. Additionally, although this product does provide the capability of creating incisions (cuts) into vital tissue which is the hallmark of excisional debridement, it is not designed, marketed or typically used to leverage that ability.

- **Option 2.** Change the indexing and tabular entries so that ultrasonic mechanical debridement systems would be assigned to code 86.22, Excisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn instead of 86.28, Nonexcisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn.

**CMS Recommendation:** Option 1, Continue capturing Misonix Ultrasonic Wound Debridement System and other ultrasonic mechanical debridement systems through code 86.28, Nonexcisional
debridement of wound, infection, or burn. Add an index entry and a tabular entry under code 86.28 for Ultrasonic mechanical debridement.

**Interim coding:** Capture the use of Ultrasonic Wound debridement through code 86.28, Nonexcisional debridement of wound, infection, or burn.