

## Dermatology Coding Alert

### Billing Corner: Safeguard Your Practice From Theft, Embezzlement, Errors

#### Follow these tips to keep track of your revenue throughout the day

Look no further than your colleagues and your computer to keep your dermatology practice's revenue safe and sound.

#### Tip 1: Perform Computer Checks

**Suggestion:** At the end of both your morning rush and your afternoon rush, you can run a day sheet from your computer tracking system that gives you the total dollar amounts for charges entered, cash collected, checks and credit-card payments collected, as well as any adjustments made to accounts that day, says **Maureen Ripley**, office and billing manager at the Ellerin Medical & Cosmetic Dermatology Center in Burlington, Mass.

Track the revenue in your practice by rechecking all of your daily tallies of your practice's earnings. You can keep track of your money both manually and by computer, Ripley says.

#### Tip 2: Team Work Increases Accountability

Use your colleagues to increase accountability for money that is brought in and taken out of the office rather than carrying the burden of proof solely on your shoulders, says **William J. Conner, MD**, founder of Conner Health Clinic, a multispecialty practice in Charlotte, N.C.

**Try this:** You can have every front-desk employee double-check the daily posted balance by making sure that whoever counts the money on that day has at least one colleague who will also count all the cash and checks to make sure your totals match up, Conner says.

Also, you should try to make sure that the employee who performs the daily close in your practice is different from the employees who post payments and collect all the payments from the day.

**Extra precaution:** Make sure the employee doing the daily close has no access to the money so she cannot change any of the entries and pocket the cash.

#### Tip 3: Collaborate With Other Doctors to Increase Safeguards

You should work with the physicians in your practice to make sure that you all use habits to protect your revenue, experts say.

**Example:** Have your dermatologist count the end-of-the-day revenue with you, and you can double-check your totals.

**Another possibility:** With every patient that your dermatologist sees, you can make a note on the encounter form that specifies what you collected for payment and how the payment was made, Ripley says.

You should have two deposit slips for each session your dermatologist completes. You can record the cash and check payments on one deposit slip and credit-card transactions on another, Ripley says.

At the end of the morning and afternoon rush, you can tally these colored deposit slips and then have the dermatologist match the number of your deposit slips to your day sheet to make sure the number of transactions matches up. Then

your accounting person can record your day's financial transactions, and your bookkeeper can bag the deposits and take them to the bank.

**Don't forget:** The deposit slip from the bank is then placed with the flow sheet after cross-checking the balance to the sheet and having either you or the dermatologist initial the final totals.