

Dermatology Coding Alert

Enjoy 4 Key UB-04 Benefits

Good news: You'll have more room for diagnosis coding

While adjusting to change can be stressful, the UB-04 offers many benefits. You can look forward to:

Some things staying the same. Many of the data locations have changed, but most of the data usage descriptions and allowable data values have not changed, Landry says.

More room. After field locator 56, which provides space for the new NPI, the most noticeable change on the UB-04 is the expansion of the diagnosis code field (67) to accept 18 ICD-9 codes. That gives you room to report up to eight additional diagnosis codes. Field locator 67 should contain the ICD-9 code for the disease condition that most accurately reflects the main reason the patient is being treated, said **Glenda J. Schuler, RHIT, CPC, CPC-H**, while speaking at the November 2006 Ingenix Essentials conference in Orlando, Fla.

Fewer forms. The UB-04 will answer the needs of many health insurers, so you can use it for more payers. Hopefully this new form will eliminate the need for more claim forms, Landry says.

Flexibility. The UB-04 can accept ICD-10 codes, so there won't be a need to transition to yet another new claim form when the migration to ICD-10 comes.