

Dermatology Coding Alert

Your ICD-10 Transition Plan Should Encompass 6 Phases,

A working budget should include every aspect of planning, including productivity training.

You may have put ICD-10 planning on the back burner once CMS delayed the implementation date by a year, but keep in mind that 2014 really is just around the corner, so the time to prepare is now. Check out the following tips offered during an Oct. 25 CMS National Provider Call entitled, "Preparing Physicians for ICD-10 Implementation."

"Education and patience are key," says **Ginger Boyle, MD**, a practicing family physician who has developed a coding education program for her hospital and its family practice residency program, during the call. Her presentation broke down your ICD-10 transition into the following six phases:

- Planning.
- Communication and awareness.
- Assessment.
- Operational implementation.
- Testing.
- Transition.

In other words: To begin, you should establish the project structure, responsible parties, and highlight physician and coding champions who can be assets. You should also create your budget. Be sure to include software upgrades, training needs, and productivity loss/gain.

Then, you talk to all those involved, which may include office administrators, vendors, providers, clearinghouses, payers, and other associates.

You need to monitor the impact on the following aspects:

- personnel: staff, providers
- claims
- reimbursement
- denials
- rejections

Bottom line: "Once you create a timeline, you need to stick to it," Boyle says. CMS finalized the ICD-10 compliance date of Oct. 1, 2014, as stated in the Sept. 5, 2012, Federal Register. When ICD-10-CM goes into effect, you should apply the code set and official guidelines in effect for the date of service reported.

For more information, you should go to the CMS ICD-10 page at www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/.