

## Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

### ICD-10 Delay: Anticipate 1 Extra Year for Your ICD-10 Implementation Schedule

**But don't count on the delay quite yet, expert warns.**

As part of a proposed rule to adopt a standard health plan identifier (HPID), **Kathleen Sebelius**, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary, announced a proposed ICD-10 implementation delay until Oct. 1, 2014.

That would give your optometry practice a one-year delay from the prior Oct. 1, 2013 deadline.

#### Change Reflects Provider Input

"Many provider groups have expressed serious concerns about their ability to meet the Oct. 1, 2013 compliance date," CMS stated in a press release available at [www.cms.gov/apps/media/press\\_releases.asp](http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp).

HHS believes the change in the compliance date for ICD-10, as proposed in this rule, would give providers and other covered entities more time to prepare and fully test their systems to ensure a smooth and coordinated transition among all industry segments, says **Michael A. Granovsky, MD, FACEP, CPC**, President of LogixHealth, a medical coding and billing company in Bedford, Mass.

The American Medical Association, which was a vocal proponent of an ICD-10 implementation delay, cheered the news. "The American Medical Association and physicians across the nation appreciate that CMS has proposed delaying the ICD-10 implementation date to October 1, 2014," said **Peter W. Carmel, MD**, the AMA's president. "The postponement is the first of many steps that regulators need to take to reduce the number of costly, time-consuming regulatory burdens that physicians are shouldering."

#### Caution: Rule is 'Proposed,' not 'Final'

Don't write the new ICD-10 deadline in pen quite yet. "ICD-10-CM is not delayed until October 1, 2014," **Lisa Selman-Holman** with Selman-Holman & Associates and CoDR -- Coding Done Right in Denton, Texas, notes on her blog. The new deadline is merely a proposal. "The healthcare industry has the opportunity to comment on the proposal and then CMS can publish a final rule."

The billions this delay is expected to cost providers may stymie the delay. "Only time will tell," Selman-Holman says.