

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Document the Need for Consults

While it's true that some physicians are too cautious about billing for consults, others go too far in the opposite direction.

"A common thing is for people to say, 'All of my services are consultations because my patients are coming from another physician,' " attorney **William Sarraille** says. But "unless that physician wants advice or information back from you, it's not a consult."

He says poor documentation is a major problem, with physicians referring to consults as "evaluation and management services" and the requesting physician as the "referring physician." He encourages practices to give receptionists a consult form to fill out and fax back to the requesting physician to clarify for all parties that a consult is happening.