

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Physician Notes: Medicare Launches Pilot Program to Put Personal Health Information in Beneficiaries' Hands

Plus: New ICD-9 codes formally released, including several new diagnosis codes that CMS hadn't previously announced

Medicare patients in Arizona and Utah can find their personal health records (PHRs) right at their fingertips, thanks to a new CMS pilot program that will start in January in those states.

As part of the program, beneficiaries will have access to their personal health record. The PHR differs from the more well known electronic health record (EHR) in that the patient has control over the PHR, whereas the physician owns an EHR.

In addition to tracking their claims data via the PHR, patients may also have access to programs that allow them to track diet and exercise, medical devices, health education information, and data on potential medication interactions, according to an Aug. 8 press release on the topic.

"This exciting pilot will be a major step forward for Medicare," said **HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt** in a statement. "We believe that it will provide information and tools that will empower consumers to manage their health," he said.

To read more about the program, visit <http://www.noridianmedicare.com/phr>.

#### In other news ...

• **Thanks to the new Inpatient Prospective Payment System rule, you'll finally have a firm list of diagnosis codes that will take effect on Oct. 1.**

Among them are 780.60 (Fever, unspecified), 780.64 (Chills [without fever]) and V61.01 (Family disruption due to family member on military deployment).

**Plus:** The IPPS also includes a "stand in the shoes" requirement, meaning that physicians who own a practice must stand in the shoes of their practice with regard to meeting Stark exceptions.

In other words, if a practice collects money from an outside entity (such as a referring radiology facility), the physician owner of that practice is considered to be directly collecting money from that entity.

To read the IPPS final rule, visit [http://federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2008-17914\\_PI.pdf](http://federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2008-17914_PI.pdf).