Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Notes: Nearly Half of Medical Students Are Trained in Fraud and Abuse Prevention

Plus: Senator Wants Medicare Contractors To Get Tough

Coders often wonder why medical schools don't better prepare physicians for the business side of medical care, including instruction on diagnosis and procedure coding, compliance, and audits. But a recent OIG study shows that medical schools have been stepping up their games.

On Oct. 19, the OIG released its report, "Medicare and Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Training in Medical Education," which found that in 2010, 44 percent of medical schools provides instruction to their students regarding Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse laws. Better still, more than two-thirds of the schools that offer residency and fellowship programs taught participants how to comply with CMS's fraud and abuse laws, the report indicated.

Medical students at the schools surveyed were trained on compliance with the False Claims Act, the physician selfreferral law, and the anti-kickback statute.

The OIG indicated that it would help grow these programs by providing additional information to the schools. "OIG plans to (1) prepare educational materials appropriate for medical schools and institutions offering residency and fellowship programs, (2) distribute the materials to those medical schools and institutions that sponsor residency and fellowship programs, and (3) seek feedback from the medical schools and institutions offering residency and fellowship programs on ways to improve the materials," the report noted. "Such feedback could include emerging compliance challenges that physicians, hospitals, and other providers face." To read the complete OIG report, visit http://go.usa.gov/aIQ.