

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Notes: Practices Still Making Massive Errors Regarding Units of Service Billed, OIG Says

Plus: Don't hold your breath waiting for an answer from CMS' ESRD mailbox -- the service is closed in preparation for ESRD FAQs

Would you notice if you performed a \$146 service and your payer reimbursed you \$36,180? That's the type of error that the OIG uncovered in a recent audit of "high dollar payments" made by Trailblazer Health Enterprises.

According to the audit report, which the OIG released on Aug. 28, Trailblazer incorrectly overpaid \$126,171 to providers for high-dollar services during the audit period. Providers who received the inappropriate payments did not, for the most part, return the money to Trailblazer.

Many of the errors were caused by providers who entered incorrect cancer drug unit amounts on their claim forms. To read the report, visit www.oig.hhs.gov/oas/reports/region3/30700017.pdf.

In other news ...

- **If you've got ESRD questions, don't look to the CMS mailbox for answers.**

After CMS released its ESRD Conditions for Coverage final rule, the agency decided to create a Final Rule Rollout Mailbox to collect inquiries about the initiative.

In response to the questions, CMS has created an ESRD "frequently asked questions" document that gives definitive answers to many of the inquiries it received. The bad news, however, is that CMS will no longer monitor the ESRD mailbox. CMS is still accepting feedback through its other channels, but its employees stopped checking the ESRD mailbox as of Sept. 1.

For more information on the ESRD rule, visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CFCsAndCoPs/13_ESRD.asp.

- **Have you been wanting to give CMS a piece of your mind? Now's your chance.**

CMS is holding a town hall meeting Sept. 22 to gather feedback on "relevant Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medicare policy and operational issues," the agency says.

The agency will make presentations on HIPAA standards, recovery audit contractors (RACs), and Medicare administrative contractor (MAC) transitions, it says.

More information, including how to sign up, is at www.cms.hhs.gov/center/provider.asp under the "Spotlights" section.