

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Physician Notes: Take a Look at AHIMA Guidance to Ease Patients' Requests for PHI

Plus: Educate yourself on 3 CMS-855 form updates for 2018.

Patients armed with their healthcare backgrounds are invested in their care and more willing to follow doctors' orders. However, despite the best intentions, it can be challenging for patients to request and gain their protected health information (PHI).

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) created a new form for providers to "streamline the process when patients request their PHI under HIPAA and comply with the timeframe and fees set out by the Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) guidance of 2016," says AHIMA's "Advocacy and Policy Efforts" section on its website.

The AHIMA form is free, customizable, easy-to-read, download, and use. It offers detailed reasoning, outlining why you must follow certain HIPAA protocols (i.e. 30-day timeframe for delivery of PHI to patient) when patients request their medical records.

Resource: For a link to the AHIMA information and patient request form, visit <http://www.ahima.org/about/advocacy/efforts>.

In other news ...

Form CMS-855, also known as the Electronic-Funds Transfer Authorization Agreement form, will be a little different in 2018, according to new guidance from Medicare Administrative Contractor Cahaba GBA.

The revamped form forecast to be out this summer and available for use immediately offers providers and suppliers more clarity on EFT authorizations. The revised CMS-855 allows users to name the "financial institution's contact person" and report whether the funds transfer is for an individual or going to a group or organization. The update also adds "four digits to the 'Provider's/Supplier's/Indirect Payment Procedure Entity's Account Number with Financial Institution,' making it consistent with the industry standard," said Cahaba GBA.

CMS-855 can be utilized as soon as it's live, but won't be officially required until Jan. 1, 2018.

Resource: For more information on the Electronic-Funds Transfer Authorization Agreement form changes, visit www.cahabagba.com/news/revised-cms-588-electronic-funds-transfer-authorization-agreement/.