

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### PHYSICIAN NOTES: Will Your Computers Be Able To Talk To Each Other?

#### House and Senate set to hash out fate of health IT

**Stay tuned:** You could be facing a tight deadline to adapt to the ICD-10 diagnosis code system, if the **House of Representatives** gets its way.

The House passed a health information technology (HIT) bill that would require you to start using ICD-10 instead of ICD-9 by October 2010, but the Senate is likely to pass a version which doesn't include that requirement. Also, the Senate bill would require HIT systems to be -interoperable,- meaning they can all talk to each other. The House version doesn't have that requirement.

**Call your representative:** Once the Senate passes a bill, the House and Senate will have a -conference- to hash out the differences between their bills. If you want your health records system to be able to exchange information with your local hospital-s, then it's not too late to let your member of Congress know. Or if you're concerned about the rush to ICD-10, you can also make your voice heard on that issue.

#### In other news:

- Medicare should restrict pay for performance (P4P) to Medicare managed care plans and leave regular fee-for-service Medicare out of the experiment for now, advises a new white paper from the conservative **Cato Institute**. -Given Medicare's patient population, size, and sensitivity to interest group lobbying, any harm that could result from a P4P scheme would be more likely to occur within traditional Medicare than elsewhere,- writes Cato scholar **Michael Cannon**.

- Meet the new boss, same as the old boss. Medicare chose the first of its Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs), which will replace your carrier and cover both Part A and Part B. The winner: **Noridian Administrative Services**, which will administer claims in Arizona, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. Medicare will name 14 more MACs soon.

- Medicare contractors should waive the Part B deductible for colorectal cancer screenings furnished on or after Jan. 1, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** instructed in Transmittal 1004.

- Plantation, FL chiropractor **Barry Silverstein** received a 34-month prison sentence, plus a \$1.8 million refund and a \$100,000 fine. Prosecutors say Silverstein bought car accident/victim information from third parties, and then paid those patients to come to his office for treatments they didn't actually receive.