

Eli's Rehab Report

Reader Question: Know These Key ICD-10 Differences

Question: What are the main differences between ICD-9 and ICD-10?

Answer: Make your transition from ICD-9 to ICD-10 easier by highlighting these six basic differences between the old and new systems:

1. ICD-10 codes are alpha numeric and up to seven characters in length; ICD-9 codes are only three to five characters.
2. ICD-10-CM has 21 chapters; ICD-9 has 17.
3. ICD-9-CM has separate V and E codes. In ICD-10, these conditions are incorporated into the main classification in the ICD-10-CM code:

Placeholders (X) are required to hold places followed by additional characters.

Seventh characters are required for obstetrics, injuries, and external causes of injuries.

Post-operative complications will now be located specific to the procedure-specific body system.

4. ICD-10 will classify injuries first by specific site and then by type of injury. ICD-9 classified injuries by type.
5. ICD-10-CM includes full code titles for all codes, so it is not necessary to reference back to common fourth and fifth digit categories.
6. ICD-10 uses combination codes for conditions and common symptoms or manifestations, for example E10.21 (Type 1 diabetes mellitus with diabetic nephropathy) and N30.01 (Acute cystitis with hematuria).