

Outpatient Facility Coding Alert

ICD-10: Are You Ready? CMS Sets ICD-10 Deadline -- Finally

Gear up for the shift with training programs and testing .

CMS has pushed back the date for ICD-10 implementation several times, which means many providers are already prepared for the transition. However, every facility and physician office should continue to stay on top of ICD-10 changes and updates as the Oct. 1, 2015, date gets closer. One way to do this is by participating in CMS's ICD-10 testing opportunities to ensure that they are compliant and prepared.

All of the Part B MAC claims processing systems are currently ready for ICD-10, CMS stated in a 2014 MLN Matters article SE1409. In addition, CMS tests its ICD-10 software every time a quarterly release is issued. On the provider side, CMS is offering three separate testing weeks for ICD-10 acknowledgement. The first took place in November 2014. Other dates will be in March and June 2015. If you'd like to participate in the testing, visit your MAC's website. CMS will also offer end-to-end testing opportunities to select practices, but have not yet announced the dates or how to volunteer.

CMS Offers Alternative for the Unprepared

On the off-chance that your practice's software isn't ready to convert to ICD-10 next October, CMS has a potential solution for you.

"If you will not be able to complete the necessary systems changes to submit claims with ICD-10 codes by October 1, 2015, you should investigate downloading the free billing software that CMS offers via their MAC websites," CMS says in the MLN Matters article. "The software has been updated to support ICD-10 codes and requires an internet connection. This billing software only works for submitting Fee-for-Service (FFS) claims to Medicare. It is intended to provide submitters with an ICD-10 compliant claims submission format; it does not provide coding assistance," CMS adds.

Resource: To read MLN Matters article SE1409, visit www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE1409.pdf.