

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Coding Update: Be prepared for the ICD-9 Update

Avoid the rush -- order your new coding manuals now.

Don't wait for claims to be delayed or denied -- prepare yourself for the new ICD-9 codes now.

Not only do these codes ensure you are properly compensated for the care you provide, they also help you track the information that will improve the quality of that care.

Remember: 2006 codes will be rejected if you use them incorrectly after Oct. 1.

Don't miss: As Oct. 1 approaches, be sure to identify any current patients who have one of the diagnoses with changing codes, advises **Judy Adams, RN, BSN, HCS-D**, with Charlotte, NC-based **LarsonAllen**. Then plan to make the appropriate changes to incorporate the new codes at the next assessment time point, she says.

To keep data accurate and expedite reimbursement, make sure you do the following to prepare for the new codes, experts advise:

- Educate staff. At least one staff member should take a recognized coding class and then inservice agency staff, advises says **Lynn Yetman, RN, MA, HCS-D, COS-C, LNC** with **Reingruber & Company**, St. Petersburg, FL. Clinicians, QA staff and billers all need to understand when to use the new codes.
- Obtain and distribute new or updated coding books.
- Collect and destroy or update old cheat sheets.
- Contact your software company to be sure you have the update installed and then test the software to make sure the changes are correct.