

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Don't Let This ICD-10 Crosswalk Quirk Trip You Up -- Bone Up On Osteoarthritis Coding

Hint: Specifics like unilateral, bilateral, and post-traumatic will help you nail this diagnosis.

Take some time now to learn a little about ICD-10 and you'll avoid major diagnosis coding headaches when the new system takes effect.

When ICD-9 becomes ICD-10 in 2013, you will not always have a simple crosswalk relationship between old codes and new ones. Often, you'll have more options that may require documentation and coding tweaks. Check out the following example of how ICD-10 will change your coding options when the calendar turns to Oct. 1, 2013.

Suppose a patient is diagnosed with osteoarthritis (715.xx-716.xx). These codes specify location, primary, or secondary.

ICD-10 difference: Once Oct. 1, 2013 rolls around, you should look to:

- M15 (Polyosteoarthritis)
- M16 (Osteoarthritis of hip)
- M17 (Osteoarthritis of knee)
- M18 (Osteoarthritis of first carpometacarpal joint)
- M19 (Other and unspecified osteoarthritis).

These codes are broken down into location, primary, and secondary like ICD-9 codes, but they also sometimes specify unilateral, bilateral, and posttraumatic indications.

Coder tips: Notice how codes M19.01-M19.93 entail unspecified locations. ICD-10 no longer groups unspecified locations alongside the specific locations for each type (as in, the familiar .9 code in most ICD-9 categories). You will find them at the end of the code grouping (M19.90-M19.93) for each specific type but in an unspecified location.

In addition, traumatic osteoarthritis is now more appropriately indexed and described as post-traumatic osteoarthritis, the true condition.