

## Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

### ICD-10 STRATEGIES: Follow These 4 Tips to Smooth Your ICD-10 Transition

Coders may need as much as 80 hours of training to get ready.

The 2013 deadline for moving to the ICD-10 diagnosis code set may seem like a distant date, but the sooner you start preparing, the easier your transition will be. Adopt the Boy Scout's "Be Prepared" motto and you might just find yourself breathing a little easier.

The transition to ICD-10 will require a lot of preparation and training, but the actual training can't be done too far out from the implementation date, warns **Therese Rode, RHIT, HCS-D**, Senior Coding Manager with INOVA VA Home Health in Springfield, Va. With training, "if you don't use it, you lose it," she says. Use the following four strategies to smooth your ICD-10 transition:

#### 1. Create a planning committee.

To get the ball rolling, agencies should form a committee that includes everyone who touches coding, Rode says.

Important: Remember to include billing, quality assurance, and IT staff -- not just coders.

Anyone involved in coding or reimbursement should be on the committee.

The committee will decide who should be the ICD-10 ringleader, what stages of the implementation will happen when, and which reports and forms need to be modified.

Bottom line: Gathering staff together will also help determine who needs what kind of training.

#### 2. Calculate your training costs.

Agencies will need to set aside money not just for training costs, but to cover the loss of productivity while staff is training, Rode reminds.

According to a study done by the Rand Corporation, health care employees who work with diagnosis and procedure codes will need between 16 and 80 hours of training to prepare for ICD-10. Using an hourly rate of \$31.25, Rand calculated that 16 hours of training will result in \$500 of lost productivity.

#### 3. Determine the productivity impact of training.

Your clinical field staff will need training on ICD-10. You need to figure out how this will impact productivity and how you will continue to provide care during the training, Rode says. Will you hire certified coders or temporary clinicians?

#### 4. Practice with a dual system.

Six months before the implementation date, start running a dual system for claims submission. Your actual claims and current reports will run through with ICD-9 codes, but a second test system will use ICD-10.

This will allow you to see where glitches may occur, to see if Home Health Resource Group (HHRG) calculations are correct, and to see what your payments convert to under ICD-10.

