

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

ICD-10 Update: New Implementation Date: Move Ahead with Your ICD-10 Preparations

CMS announces one-year delay to new diagnosis coding set.

If your ICD-10 preparations have been in limbo while you wait for word on the possible delay, it's time to get back to work on them. In a final rule in the Sept. 5 Federal Register, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** finalizes its proposed one-year delay to implementation of the new ICD-10 diagnosis coding set.

CMS had announced a delay of unspecified length in February, and then in April proposed the one-year deadline bump to October 2014.

The change in the compliance date is intended to give covered healthcare providers and other covered entities more time to prepare and fully test their systems to ensure a smooth and coordinated transition by all covered entities, CMS notes in the rule. The one-year delay gives providers a break but also minimizes disruption and costs a longer postponement would cause.

ICD-10-CM/PCS implementation is inevitable, but today's news gives the healthcare community the certainty and clarity it needs to move forward with implementation, testing, and training, says the **American Health Information Management Association** in a release.

Look for increased education and outreach events from the **Department of Health and Human Services** as they work to assist healthcare providers' preparations to meet the new compliance date. The healthcare industry can expect a focus on improvements to the overall standards implementation process as the date approaches.

Bright side: While providers wait on ICD-10 implementation, no ICD-9-CM diagnosis code updates are planned for ICD-9 2013 (effective Oct. 1, 2012). There's a freeze in place until ICD-10-CM replaces ICD-9-CM.

Potential changes for the annual ICD-9-CM update usually appear at this time of year in CMS's Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) proposed rule, but this year's IPPS indicated you won't have to deal with any changes. You can focus on ICD-10 prep instead.

Note: The final rule is at www.ofr.gov/inspection.aspx under an 8/24 CMS entry.