Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Question: Don't Be Afraid to Ask

Question: I was looking over my clinician's coding and noticed that she assigned a diagnosis code of 530.1 (Esophagitis), when in the medical record there was a note stating that the patient had "some reflux with esophagitis." Wouldn't 530.11 be the correct code, rather than 530.1?

South Carolina Subscriber

Answer: If there's any question about the diagnosis, you should query the physician regarding the diagnosis, says **JoAnn Baker, CCS, CPC-H, CPC, CHCC,** an education specialist in East Orange, N.J.

If you assign 530.1 as your diagnosis code, you may be understating the condition the clinician was dealing with, because this code is not as specific as 530.11, for example. Since the clinician assigned 530.1 in the first place, however, you need to ask her whether she meant to report 530.11. If she did make an error, she should cross out the incorrect code and date the correction.