

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Question: Follow These Steps To Begin Your ICD-10 Preparations

Question: Our agency hasn't begun ICD-10 training yet, and we're getting worried. What can we do now to begin to prepare?

Indiana Subscriber

Answer: One relatively inexpensive way to begin your ICD-10 transition is to purchase an ICD-10 manual. Familiarizing yourself with this essential tool will help you to become more comfortable with the code set before you begin formal training.

Just as with ICD-9, if you want to improve your diagnosis coding, look first at the introductory material in your coding manual. Here you'll find a good summary of "Steps to Correct Coding" to use as a guide when selecting diagnosis codes.

The most important step is to begin your coding search by consulting the alphabetic index, which is arranged by condition. Narrow your search using this index. Then cross-reference the codes you find by looking them up in the tabular list. Read the precise definition of your tentative code selections here. The tabular list provides additional information that will help you pinpoint the exact codes you need.

Never choose a code without referring to the ICD-10 alphabetic index first, then check the tabular section for confirmation and specificity. Read any coding notes to assist in accurate assignment.

Reading through the coding guidelines and looking up codes for some common diagnoses will give you greater confidence as the official transition date draws nearer.