

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

Reader Question: Know These Key ICD-10 Differences

Question: What are the main differences between ICD-9 and ICD-10?

South Carolina Subscriber

Answer: Make your transition from ICD-9 to ICD-10 easier by highlighting these six basic differences between the old and new systems:

1. ICD-10 codes are alpha numeric and up to seven characters in length; ICD-9 codes are only three to five characters.
2. ICD-10-CM has 21 chapters; ICD-9 has 17.
3. ICD-9-CMs V and E codes are incorporated into the main classification in the ICD-10-CM code:
 - Placeholders (X) are required to hold places followed by additional characters.
 - Seventh characters are required for obstetrics, injuries, and external causes of injuries.
 - Post-operative complications will now be located specific to the procedure-specific body system.
4. ICD-10 will classify injuries first by specific site and then by type of injury. ICD-9 classified injuries by type.
5. ICD-10-CM includes full code titles for all codes, so it is not necessary to reference back to common fourth and fifth digit categories.
6. Combination codes for conditions and common symptoms or manifestations, for example E10.21 (Type 1 diabetes mellitus with diabetic nephropathy) and N30.01 (Acute cystitis with hematuria).