

## OASIS Alert

### News You Can Use: New Coding Examples Are Online

Thanks to October's introduction of V and E codes into the diagnosis coding mix, agencies need all the coding help they can get.

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** posted Sept. 30 an overview of how clinicians should approach M0230, M0240 and M0245 under the new rules. The document "OASIS Diagnosis Reporting Case Examples" contains detailed discussions of case examples to illustrate the changes.

The examples include some of the more troublesome issues frequently encountered in home care, including a case in which the patient's diabetes is not primary; a diabetic patient with a stasis ulcer; a patient post-mastectomy; a diabetic receiving postoperative care; and a patient with a hip fracture. One problem with the examples is CMS didn't really spell out that when you have a diagnosis in M0240, you don't always have to have one in M0245, says **National Association for Home Care & Hospice** VP of Regulatory Affairs **Mary St. Pierre**.

But the new examples probably won't shed much light on the topic. They are pretty much the same as the ones CMS already had put out, they just "wiggled the old ones around," she says. The case examples are at [www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/hhapps/diagnosis.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/providers/hhapps/diagnosis.pdf).

1. **Home care providers can download a copy** of the new PC Pricer software from the CMS Web site. The software "is a personal computer compatible version of the software used in Medicare systems to calculate payments under the home health prospective payment system," CMS notes.

The new software, which reflects the payment rate update that took effect Oct. 1, is available at <http://cms.hhs.gov/providers/pricer>.

2. Home health agencies seem to follow in the footsteps of nursing homes - and that could include tougher surveys ahead as quality of care takes center stage. Sen. **Charles Grassley** (R-IA) recently held a series of oversight hearings that warn of increasing scrutiny for home health providers.

Focusing on a July **General Accounting Office** report ([www.gao.gov/new.items/d03561.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03561.pdf)) Grassley said he would demand a "timeline" from CMS for taking GAO-recommended steps to strengthen oversight of the state survey process. But CMS Administrator **Tom Scully** noted a potential impediment to long-term improvements: CMS' funding for overseeing the survey process has been held flat for several years.

Grassley said he would ask the GAO "to look into the adequacy of federal funding for state survey and certification activities - not just for nursing homes but for other providers, such as home health care."