



COMPLIANCE E-NEWS



ICD-10 News Flash

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen G. Sebelius announced February 16, 2012 that HHS will initiate a process to postpone the date by which certain health care entities have to comply with International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition diagnosis and procedure codes (ICD-10). The implementation of ICD-10 was scheduled for October 1, 2013.

Over the past few months, the American Medical Association has been actively working toward delaying ICD-10 implementation. In mid-January, a letter from AMA Executive Vice President and CEO James L. Madara, M.D. to House Speaker John Boehner stated that, "requiring all physician practices to use new diagnosis codes starting October 1, 2013, also would interfere with concurrent efforts by doctors to implement electronic medical records and satisfy other Medicare quality improvements." Dr. Madara outlined that ICD-10 implementation requires physicians and their office staff to contend with 68,000 codes – a five-fold increase from the current 13,000 codes and would be a massive administrative and financial undertaking requiring education, software, coder training, and testing with payers.

Secretary Sebelius stated, "ICD-10 codes are important to many positive improvements in our health care system. We have heard from many in the provider community who have concerns about the administrative burdens they face in the years ahead. We are committing to work with the provider community to reexamine the pace at which HHS and the nation implement these important improvements to our health care system."

Currently, ICD-9 code sets are used by health care providers, payers, clearinghouses, and billing services to communicate information about patient diagnoses and procedures. The transition to ICD-10 is occurring because ICD-9 provides limited data about patients' medical conditions and hospital inpatient procedures. Transitioning to ICD-10 will be a massive project involving complex processes and will require coordination on multiple levels. While ICD-9 codes are 3-5 numeric digits, ICD-10 codes have 3-7 digits and are alpha-numeric. Codes will be anatomically and physiologically descriptive.

ICD-10 codes provide more specific data that may be utilized to improve patient care and promote the exchange of health care data. Entities covered under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) will be required to use the ICD-10 diagnostic and procedure codes. ICD-10-CM/PCS (International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition, Clinical Modification/Procedure Coding System) consists of two parts:

1. ICD-10-CM for diagnosis coding
2. ICD-10-PCS for inpatient procedure coding

The March 20, 2012 Compliance Billers Meeting will feature a one hour audio presentation, *Understanding ICD-10*. The basic quick refresher course in anatomy and physiology will outline some of the differences and challenges in ICD-10 transition in the future. The meeting will be held in Learning Resource Center (LRC) Auditorium C at 10:00 am.

More information on ICD-10 can be obtained on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services webpage, <https://www.cms.gov/ICD10>.

