

Clinical Social Work

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PRACTICEUPDATE

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CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS BE AWARE: THE ICD-10-CM IS COMING

The *International Classification of Diseases-9th Edition-Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM)* is a diagnosis classification system used to identify diseases. In 2003, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA, P.L. 104-191) standardized uniform electronic code sets and identified *ICD-9-CM*, or its updated counterpart, as the diagnostic code set to use when seeking reimbursement for services performed. The *ICD-9-CM* is over 30 years old, contains outdated and obsolete terminology, and does not accurately describe diagnoses of the 21st century. Therefore, it will be replaced in 2013 by the *International Classification of Diseases-10th Edition-Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM)*.

The *Federal Register* issued on January 16, 2009, released the final rule for the HIPAA Administrative Simplification: Modifications to Medical Data Code Set Standards to Adopt *ICD-10-CM*, and announced the adoption of *ICD-10-CM* as the standard to be used when coding diseases. The policy was officially adopted on March 17, 2009, with a compliance date of October 1, 2013. The date of implementation is for all providers, including clinical social workers, psychologists, physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, and ambulatory clinics. According to the final rule, *ICD-10-CM* may not be used prior to the compliance date. **Addendum: In 2012, compliance date was extended to October 1, 2014. On April 1, 2014, the compliance date was extended to October 1, 2015.**

ICD-10-CM is a diagnosis classification system that was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for use in all United States health care settings. It is maintained and distributed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). There are approximately 68,000 *ICD-10-CM* codes identifying health and mental health diseases with three to seven alpha and numeric digits. The *ICD-10-CM* format is the same as that in the *ICD-9-CM*. It reports diagnoses in clinical situations and will improve the quality of reporting diseases by

- Updating medical terminology and classification of diseases
- Allowing for expansion in code development
- Providing specific diagnosis and treatment information for
 - 1) making clinical decisions
 - 2) measuring care
 - 3) tracking public health information
 - 4) conducting research
 - 5) processing claims

Because adequate preparation time is being provided, HHS has announced there will be no delay in implementation of *ICD-10-CM*. *ICD-9-CM* codes will not be accepted for services provided on or after October 1, 2013, and will result in

claim denials. Any *ICD-9-CM* claims filed for services before the implementation date

will continue to be processed after October 1, 2013. The Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes will not be affected by the implementation of *ICD-10-CM*.

Because the conversion from *ICD-9-CM* to *ICD-10-CM* will require significant changes in clinical practice and administrative systems, clinical social workers should prepare now for the transition. Preparation may include

- training to become familiar with the new codes
- mapping *ICD-9-CM* codes to *ICD-10-CM* codes
- upgrading or purchasing new practice management and electronic record systems to accommodate the data format of *ICD-10-CM*
- becoming familiar with your billing services and clearing house implementation plans for *ICD-10-CM*
- testing *ICD-10-CM* transactions prior to the compliance date.

ICD-10-CM codes are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office as well as private publishers. Some large bookstores may also sell the codes. Clinical social workers who use electronic transactions should check with their vendor to see if they are upgrading or offering a new system for *ICD-10-CM*.

NASW will keep its members abreast of developments as the health care system transitions from *ICD-9-CM* to *ICD-10-CM*. Additional information about *ICD-10-CM* is available online on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Web site at www.cms.hhs.gov/ICD10.

Resources

HIPAA Administrative Simplification: Modifications to Medical Data Code Set Standards to Adopt *ICD-10-CM* and *ICD-10-PCS*, 74 Fed. Reg. 3328. (Jan. 16, 2009). Available online at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-743.pdf>