Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania is committed to giving you information to help you successfully transition to ICD-10.

As we prepare for ICD-10 implementation on October 1, 2014, there has been much discussion around how this new coding set will affect documentation requirements. We want to help ensure your clinical documentation is ICD-10-ready.

In this new coding classification, the number of codes will increase from approximately 13,000 to 70,000 codes. This will call for proper training of coders so they are able to efficiently and accurately process these codes. However, **accurate and specific clinical documentation by the practitioner will be critical** so that the coder will be able to assign the most appropriate code.

The need for accurate documentation

- With the increased number of codes in ICD-10, increased specificity will be required. This means practitioners will need to collect more detailed information for documentation in order to allow coders to select the right ICD-10 code.

- It is important to remember that medical coders are only able to code what is documented by practitioners. Complete documentation ensures that the coder accurately captures every service rendered. This means that all services are accounted for and reimbursed appropriately.

- Accurate and complete documentation will help reduce the need for coders or office staff to ask the practitioner for more information. This improves the efficiency of medical billing and reimbursement workflows.

- Proper clinical documentation further has the ability to improve overall care. This ensures patient safety and provides important clinical data and quality improvement opportunities.

Things to keep in mind

- The ability to bill for a service provided depends on proper documentation. **If it’s not documented, it can’t be captured or coded.**

- Take a look at the documentation for the most often used ICD-9 codes in your practice and work with coding staff to select the appropriate corresponding ICD-10 codes. Identifying these codes will help reinforce the information to focus on when documenting for ICD-10.

- Perform chart reviews and implement dual coding to identify gaps in documentation well in advance of ICD-10 implementation. As a result, documentation problems can be identified and solutions, such as clinical documentation improvement programs, can be developed and implemented before the October 1, 2014 deadline.

- Remember, as CMS notes: “ICD-10 will not affect the way you provide patient care. It will just be important to make your documentation as detailed as possible since ICD-10 gives more specific choices for coding diagnoses.

### CLINICAL DOCUMENTATION SAMPLE

CMS provides the following example of a common diagnosis that will require specific information to accurately code for ICD-10:

**Diabetes Mellitus:**
- Type of diabetes
- Body system affected
- Complication or manifestation
- If type 2 diabetes, long-term insulin use

**Fractures:**
- Site
- Laterality
- Type
- Location

**Injuries:**
- External cause – Provide the cause of the injury; when meeting with patients, ask and document “how” the injury happened.
- Place of occurrence – Document where the patient was when the injury occurred; for example, include if the patient was at home, at work, in the car, etc.
- Activity code – Describe what the patient was doing at the time of the injury; for example, was he or she playing a sport or using a tool?
- External cause status – Indicate if the injury was related to military, work, or other.
This information is likely already being shared by the patient during your visit—it’s just a matter of recording it properly for your coding staff. “

For more information, visit BCNEPA’s ICD-10 website at bcnepa.com/providers. Click on “Provider Resources and Tools,” then “Privacy” and “ICD-10.” You can also check out the CMS ICD-10 website at cms.gov/ICD10 for the latest news and resources to help you prepare for the October 1, 2014 deadline.

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)