5 Steps to a Smooth ICD-10 Conversion
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Purpose of this Document
This document is a white paper on how practices can successfully go through the ICD-10 transition.
5 Steps to a Smooth ICD-10 Conversion

1. Bring together a team for the ICD-10 conversion
2. Determine the level of your current systems and processes
3. Let your payers know about the ICD-10 conversion
4. Determine all possible changes to your workflows
5. Staff training & Costs
Determined by the advent in healthcare technologies, the World Health Organization has brought out the updated ICD codes. These new codes encompass a wider range of diseases and their procedures, making it easier for doctors to implement them.

The new ICD-10 codes will significantly affect all angles of your practice. Indeed, the ICD-10 conversion is a daunting process but it can be overcome through vigilance, determination and our help. We can develop an overall plan to help you through the process. Let us start with the steps you need to take now!

**Step 1: Bring together a team for the ICD-10 conversion**

Once you are prepared to take on this challenge, it is time for you to gather and allocate your best resources. First, you will need to appoint the supervisor for the project. This supervisor is someone who you can trust, who makes sure that the work gets done and who has the knowledge and expertise of using the ICD-9 coding system. When you have appointed the right person to lead the project, you will have to make sure that the rest of the team is proactive and confident about the ICD-10 conversion. Ask the supervisor to hold weekly or bi-monthly discussion sessions with the team involved in the conversion.

Apart from the ICD-10 education, these discussions can also be used to motivate the team, and to give an ear to the problems they face – ensuring that they move ahead without any previous issues.

**Step 2: Determine the level of your current systems and processes**

The conversion to ICD-10 will impact almost all processes and procedures at your practice. Therefore, it is imperative to make a list of all the areas that will be affected.

- Reports and Documentation
- Superbills
- Practice Management Software
- Electronic Health Records
- Contracts

The ICD-10 conversion will not happen overnight and will not be free. It will cost the practice in terms of new software, software maintenance, training, administrative time and costs and other factors such as changes in documentation leading to increased or decreased costs.

What happens now?

The conversion to ICD-10 will be a major change in the healthcare industry. 68,000 codes will have to be incorporated in daily procedures and processes. Before the October 2014 deadline, providers will need to test the new codes in their systems. The process is daunting – but you have a major advantage if you follow these steps.

ICD-10 conversion is imperative for the stability and profitability of your practice. So, to cement your future, start working on your ICD-10 conversion. CureMD can help you in a smooth ICD-10 transformation. Always the first to implement the latest regulations, CureMD is ready for ICD-10, so you remain compliant at all times.
Step 3: Let your payers know about the ICD-10 conversion and how it will impact them

The changes in ICD-10 will lead to changes in terms of payers’ contracts. Therefore, you will have to be vigilant and make sure you know the specific medications that are going to be made. Since the new coding system incorporates more details and specifications compared to the previous codes, it is imperative to figure out how much you will be paid based on the new codes.

Also, you will need to contact each payer to ask if they plan to renegotiate their contracts. If they do, which they probably will, inquire when negotiations will occur and how it impacts reporting and payment.

Step 4: Determine all possible changes to your workflows

Remember, the road to ICD-10 is steep. Only the most vigilant will get to the top. Therefore it is highly important to plan ahead.

After determining the current procedures and processes, it will be time to identify how the looming changes are going to affect your practice. Will it make things complicated or easy? Who will you need to train? Will it take time? Will your system be able to handle it?

Documentation: You will need to update the existing documented workflows and guides to accommodate the changes brought in by ICD-10

Superbills: You will need to ensure that the forms include the new detailed and specific codes

Accordingly, any official document that is used in your daily process will need to be updated. This can be tricky and time-taking – but has to be done to ensure that you are up-to-speed with the rest of the industry.

Step 5: Staff training & Costs

For a comprehensive and smooth transition, it is imperative to ensure that your staff is up-to-date regarding the changes made to ICD-9. It is even more important for them to be able to use them in the system appropriately. This staff can include clinical, administrative and billing staff.

Make sure you have a training plan and the staff knows when and where the trainings are going to be held.
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The conversion to ICD-10 will be a major change in the healthcare industry. 68,000 codes will have to be incorporated in daily procedures and processes. Before the October 2015 deadline, providers will need to test the new codes in their systems. The process is daunting – but you have a major advantage if you follow these steps.

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