5 steps towards smooth ICD-10 conversion

A White Paper by CureMD

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Introduction

In October 2013, The World Health Organization introduced the updated ICD codes. These new codes encompass a wider range of diseases and their procedures, making it easier for doctors to increase specificity of diseases.

The new ICD-10 codes will significantly affect all aspects of your practice. Indeed, ICD-10 conversion is a daunting process but it can be overcome through vigilance, determination and diligent consultancy.
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Assemble a team for ICD-10 conversion

In order to take on this challenging project, you need to allocate your best resources. First, you will need to appoint a project manager. This manager should be someone who you can trust, who makes sure that the work gets done and who has in-depth 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 ensure that the rest of the team is proactive and confident about ICD-10 conversion. The manager should hold a weekly meeting with the team involved in the conversion.

In addition to ICD-10 education, these meetings can also be used to motivate the team, and to address any problems they may face – ensuring that they focus on the job at hand.
Access your documentation & processes for ICD-10

With more detailed information available in the ICD-10 codes, you might need to adjust your documentation to better capture the concepts that will be needed for coding. 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
3.

Educate your payers about ICD-10 conversion and how it will impact them

ICD-10 will lead to several changes in terms of payers’ contracts. Therefore, you will have to remain vigilant and make sure you know the specific medications that are going to be coded under the new system. Since the new coding system incorporates more details and specifications compared to previous codes, it is imperative to determine how much you will be paid according to new codes.
Highlight all possible changes to your workflows

The road towards ICD-10 is going to get bumpy. Only the most diligent personnel will get to the top. Therefore, it is very important to plan ahead of time.

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

**Documentation:** You will need to update the existing workflows to accommodate ICD-10 changes.

**Superbills:** You will need to ensure that the forms include the latest codes.

Accordingly, any official document that is used in your daily process will need to be updated. This can be tricky and time-consuming – but it has to be done to ensure that you are up-to-speed with the rest of the industry.
5.

Calculate staff training costs

For a comprehensive and smooth transition, it is imperative to ensure that your staff, including clinical, administrative and billing personnel, 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.

Make sure you have a training plan and the staff knows when and where the trainings are going to be held. The ICD-10 conversion will not happen overnight and will not be free of cost. It will cost the practice in terms of new software maintenance, training, administration, 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 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. 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 achieve a smooth ICD-10 implementation process. Always the first to implement the latest regulations, CureMD is ready for ICD-10, so that you remain compliant at all times.
About CureMD

CureMD is the leading provider of Cloud-based EHR, Practice Management and Medical Billing Services to transform the administrative and clinical operations of healthcare organizations of all sizes. Our award winning solutions simplify decision making, streamline operations and ensure compliance with industry standards and best practices – ultimately saving time and effort to maximize value and returns.

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