



Practice Notes: Coding Tips

There are many approaches to documentation of services that will go a long way toward ensuring compliance. Much of this is common sense while some may not be as obvious. I offer some common errors and basic tips for coding:

Common Documentation and Billing Errors

1. No documentation for service billed
2. Missing signatures
3. Assigning the same level of service
4. Billing for a consultation instead of an office visit
5. Using invalid codes from old coding resources
6. Unbundling procedure codes
7. Misinterpreting abbreviations
8. Not listing the chief complaint
9. Billing of service included in the global fee as a separate professional fee
10. Assigning inappropriate modifier

Physician Documentation Tips

1. Be specific: Coders are not permitted to base codes on lab reports
2. Specify definitive principal diagnosis
3. List all complications and co-morbidities that affect treatment received on extended length of stays
4. Specify acute or chronic
5. Specify adverse effects of a drug or a treatment: Specify the nature of the effect and treatment
6. Specify complication cause (e.g., postoperative, mechanical failure, drug induced)
7. Use qualifiers for secondary diagnosis "due to," "secondary to," "with"
8. Specify if heart or renal disease is "due to hypertension"
9. List "late effect" and nature of residual illness or injury
10. Document legibly

Sparrow's Online Flu Kit – information for patients, links to the CDC and flu information in 17 different languages – go to Sparrow.org/flu



Jason Cochran, D.O.

First femur replacement surgery performed

In August, orthopedic surgeon **Jason Cochran, D.O.**, performed Sparrow's first femur replacement surgery. Only about 80 of these complex procedures are performed each year nationwide. Although this rare procedure was a first for Sparrow, Dr. Cochran had performed similar surgeries during his fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic.

Centralized Peer Review Committee adopted

I want to thank all the members of our Medical Staff for overwhelmingly approving changes to the bylaws that will allow a central peer review committee to be formed. Although many of the details are yet to be ironed out, the new committee will implement a new peer review process that creates greater opportunities to improve clinical practices and emphasizes educational intervention. More details on the peer review process are forthcoming.

Tips and Tricks to access electronic information

Information Services is presenting "Tips and Tricks" sessions to help physicians access STAR, check census, access lab results remotely, use IRHIS and view radiology results. The next Tips and Tricks sessions will be held in the Physician Communication Center on these dates: Oct. 20, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Nov. 17, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.; and Dec. 15, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.



Please contact me with your thoughts, comments and ideas regarding this issue, or for any subjects featured in *Sparrow Physician*. Dawn Springer, MD, Chief of the Medical Staff dawn.springer@sparrow.org