DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

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Partial Code Freeze Prior to ICD-10 Implementation

Note: This article was revised on August 1, 2014, to make changes as a result of the delay of ICD-10 implementation until October 1, 2015.

Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Special Edition Article affects all Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) physicians, providers, suppliers, and other entities who submit claims to Medicare contractors for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries in any health setting.

What You Need to Know

At a meeting on September 14, 2011, the ICD-9-CM Coordination & Maintenance (C&M) Committee implemented a partial freeze of the ICD-9-CM and ICD-10 (ICD-10-CM and ICD-10-PCS) codes prior to the implementation of ICD-10 which would end one year after the implementation of ICD-10. The implementation of ICD-10 was delayed from October 1, 2014 to October 1, 2015 by final rule CMS-0043-F issued on July 31, 2014. This final rule is available at **https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/08/04/2014-18347/change-to-the-compliance-date-for-the-international-classification-of-diseases-10th-revision** on the Internet.

There was considerable support for this partial freeze. The partial freeze will be implemented as follows:

- The last regular, annual updates to both ICD-9-CM and ICD-10 code sets were made on October 1, 2011.

- On October 1, 2012, October 1, 2013, and October 1, 2014, there will be only limited code updates to both the ICD-9-CM and ICD-10 code sets to capture new technologies and diseases as required by section 503(a) of Pub. L. 108-173.

- On October 1, 2015, there will be only limited code updates to ICD-10 code sets to capture new technologies and diagnoses as required by section 503(a) of Pub. L. 108-173. No further updates will be made to ICD-9-CM on or after October 1, 2015, as it will no longer be used for reporting; and

- On October 1, 2016, regular updates to ICD-10 will begin.

The ICD-9-CM Coordination and Maintenance Committee will continue to meet twice a year during the partial freeze. At these meetings, the public will be asked to comment on whether or not requests for new diagnosis or procedure codes should be created based on the criteria of the need to capture a new technology or disease. Any code requests that do not meet the criteria will be evaluated for implementation within ICD-10 on and after October 1, 2016 once the partial freeze has ended.

The code freeze was initially discussed at the September 15, 2010, meeting of the committee. To view the transcript of that meeting, go to:
http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/index.html on the CMS website. From there, select the September 15-16, 2010, meeting documents and transcripts from the Downloads section, and then from the ZIP files, select the '091510_Morning_Transcript' file. This section appears on page 4 of the 78-page document.

To view the Summary Report of the meeting, go to:
http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/index.html on the CMS website. From there, select the September 15-16, 2010, meeting documents and transcripts from the Downloads section, and then from the ZIP files, select the '091510_ICD9_Meeting_Summary_report.pdf' file. Information on the Code Freeze begins on page 5.

Additional Information

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed a variety of educational resources to help Medicare FFS providers understand and prepare for the transition to ICD-10. General information about ICD-10 is available at http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/index.html on the CMS website.

In addition, the following CMS resources are available to assist in your transition to ICD-10:

- **Medicare Fee-for-Service Provider Resources Web Page -**This site links Medicare Fee-For-Service (FFS) providers to information and educational resources that are useful for all providers to implement and transition to ICD-10 medical coding in a 5010 environment. As educational materials become available specifically for Medicare FFS providers, they will be posted to this web page. Bookmark http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/index.html and check back regularly for access to ICD-10 implementation information of importance to you. *Note: Use the links on*

the left side of the web page to navigate to ICD-10 and 5010 information applicable to your specific interest.

- **CMS Sponsored National Provider Conference Calls -** During the ICD-10 implementation period, CMS will periodically host national provider conference calls focused on various topics related to the implementation of ICD-10. Calls will include a question and answer session that will allow participants to ask questions of CMS subject matter experts. These conference calls are offered free of charge and require advance registration. Continuing education credits may be awarded for participation in CMS national provider conference calls. For more information, including announcements and registration information for upcoming calls, presentation materials and written and audio transcripts of previous calls, please visit http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/index.html on the CMS website.

- **See MLN Matters® Special Edition Article, SE1239,** at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE1239.pdf for an overview of what is needed to implement ICD-10.

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) -** To access FAQs related to ICD-10, please visit the CMS ICD-10 web page at http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/index.html, select the **Medicare Fee-for-Service Provider Resources** link from the menu on the left side of the page, scroll down the page to the "Related Links Inside CMS" section and select "ICD-10 FAQs". Please check the ICD-10 FAQ section regularly for newly posted or updated ICD-10 FAQs.

The following organizations offer providers and others ICD-10 resources:

- **Workgroup for Electronic Data Interchange (WEDI)** http://www.wedi.org*; and*

- **Health Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)** http://www.himss.org/icd10 on the Internet.