Health Plan's Position on ICD-10

Q. What is your health plan's position on the final rules issued for ICD-10 compliance?

A. We have met all applicable time frames for compliance and we have worked with providers, software vendors and third-party billing agencies as they strive for compliance. We believe that more detailed coding is helpful and brings the U.S. in line with non-U.S. practices. ICD-10 codes allow for more accurate information to accompany a claim, which will allow for more accurate claims payment and coverage decisions.

Q. What did the health plan do to prepare for the ICD-10 conversion?

A. We have engaged impacted areas of our company in assessment and planning for the move to ICD-10. A roadmap to meet the compliance date was followed and it incorporates system design and development, business processes and policies development, along with communication and training for affected constituencies.

We have collaborated with the medical community to share information and minimize disruption related to the ICD-10 conversion. We have worked across the industry, with America's Health Insurance Plans, the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, industry work groups, local health insurance payers and regional medical societies to address transition and implementation issues. We have aligned ourselves with CMS' direction and have provided feedback on ICD-10 conversion.

Q. Will the ICD-10 conversion impact provider reimbursement and contracting?

A. The transition will impact the entire industry. ICD-10 is intended to more accurately reflect patient status which will ultimately improve patient care. It's important to note that the ICD-10 conversion was not intended to transform payment or reimbursement; however, it may result in reimbursement differences.

Q. What is your health plan's approach to mapping ICD-9 codes to ICD-10 codes?

A. Mappings between ICD-9 and ICD-10 identify corresponding diagnosis and procedure codes amid the two code sets. CMS has provided General Equivalency Mappings (GEMs) as an approach to define reasonable alternatives for mappings between ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes in both directions. While the GEMs provide guidance and a foundation for mapping development, there is currently no industry standard for mapping. We have used the GEMs as the basis for mapping with the goal of mapping ICD-9 codes to ensure clinical and contractual equivalence for our business requirements.

Q. Will your health plan support dual intake of codes?

A. Our health plan will NOT allow dual processing of ICD-9 and ICD-10 after October 1, 2015. Dual processing is the acceptance and processing of both ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes for dates of service on and after October 1, 2015.

Q. Have all the medical policies been updated with an equivalent ICD-10 code?

A. Our medical policies have been reviewed and updated.