

DR. KNOW

We won't change the way you do billing...we'll change the way you do business!

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You can view past issues of this newsletter on our website.

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TODAY'S HEALTH REALITY *Recent Trends*

In an article published by Health Capital Topics (March 2009), it was estimated that the overall individual healthcare spending for 2008 will have fallen to a 15 year low. However, while 2008 has been characterized by a decline in the growth of healthcare expenditures (\$2.4 trillion in 2008), overall spending will outpace the limping economy. This means that healthcare will result in a larger percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

It is also stated that the number of individuals enrolling in public funding programs such as Medicaid and SCHIP will increase by 2.4 million, with the number of uninsured increasing another 2.6 million.

Because of the current budget shortfalls in many states, public funding reimbursements to medical professionals will be lower.

DEBTS OF THE DECEASED *Applicable for the State of WI*

If you have a patient that dies and still owes you money, here is what you are allowed to do to collect that debt and the limit of liability of family members.

In the State of Wisconsin spouses are liable for the debts of their deceased spouses. These laws are complicated and you should contact a lawyer for specifics and put together policies & procedures for these collection efforts. (§ 766.55 and 859.18)

If the decedent is not a spouse, parents, children or friends are not liable for payment unless there is a signed contract in the mix.

The proceeds from life insurance were never the actual property of the decedent so these funds cannot be tied into any payment of debt unless they are left to the spouse.

If there is no spouse and no estate there is no obligation of payment. These balances must be adjusted off.



EMR REIMBURSEMENT

Finally An Answer

If you have purchased an EMR system and are wondering how to access government funds for this, wonder no more.

Apparently, the funding was given before the reimbursement process was invented.

Plexus will keep track of this process and advise you immediately upon implementation of an applicable form.

Be sure to keep track of your exact purchase date as the earlier you sign up with one the more \$\$\$\$ you will receive.

CCI UPDATE

Effective April 1, 2009

Version 15.1 of the Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) has been released and the impact upon reimbursement is staggering.

CMS has added 304,085 new edit pairs, bringing the total active CCI edits in the database to 629,107. Of these new ones, 47 are retroactively dated to January 1, 2009.

There are 34 changes to modifier indicators, which means that even with a modifier you “won’t get paid at all.”

It seems that CMS is getting out of control trying to control code bundling. It is impossible to monitor and maintain billing accuracy. To this end Plexus is in the process of purchasing third-party software that all of these edits can be loaded into and your claims can be “scrubbed” prior to insurance submission. This software also gives us the ability to apply unique physician or specialty requirements that will help provide additional “clean claim” management and payment upon the first submission.

MARKETING EFFORTS

Forging Ahead

Plexus will be launching a marketing campaign in the second quarter of 2009 to increase our client base.

We offer a \$500 referral incentive to anyone who gives us the name of a medical professional who signs a two year contract with us.

We can provide medical billing service and consultation services to any specialty, including dental.

Please keep us in mind as you communicate with your peers and let us know how we can help them.

MC IS PAPERLESS

Requirements

Medicare (MC) has gone completely paperless. They require even secondary claims to go electronically. The exceptions are those practices that are less than 10 full time employees. MC is asking that we prove your status so that the few MC secondary claims can be submitted on paper.

They will accept this in the manner of a copy of your federal or state corporate tax form that lists your employees and their annual/quarterly wages. Once we send this in there will be no more issues on paper submissions.

There are still a couple of our clients who received multiple page letters from MC saying they will not accept paper claims. This letter explains what IRS forms are acceptable to waive this status.

Please call us when or if you receive this letter. We’ll help you through it.