

Tips for Effective Implementation of ICD-10:

By now, providers and payers are aware of the upcoming transition to the *International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision (ICD-10)* and may be preparing for the October 1, 2013, compliance date. Specific activities depend greatly on the organization and provider; there are basic activities that are consistent for payer organizations and across all provider types that, when planned appropriately, can make the effort of migrating to the new code set a little easier. Here are four areas that can be started today which will provide a foundation for a successful ICD-10 implementation.

1. **Establish an ICD-10 Team** – This can also be referred to as an ICD-10 Executive Steering Committee, depending on the size and complexity of an organization. A typical structure would include an executive sponsor, a project management component, and sub-workgroups composed of the key business areas throughout the organization that will be impacted by ICD-10. A knowledgeable cross-functional team can provide the necessary collaborative environment to address an organization’s specific needs and issues. Responsibilities should include:
 - Designating a lead expert who can act as the project manager
 - Identifying and prioritizing necessary activities
 - Establishing regular and frequent meetings
 - Creating a communication plan
 - Creating an education and outreach plan

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), and the Workgroup for Electronic Data Interchange (WEDI) <http://www.wedi.org> have information and tools available to the public. AHIMA has developed an *ICD-10 Preparation Checklist* and an ICD-10 Readiness and Assessment Tool that can be downloaded from the Preparing for ICD-10 site: <http://www.ahima.org/icd10/preparing.aspx>. CMS has also published some basic steps for providers to prepare for ICD-10 which can be viewed on the ICD-10 Provider Resources webpage: http://www.cms.gov/ICD10/05a_ProviderResources.asp#TopOfPage

2. **Create an Education and Training Strategy** – Due to the changes and increased complexity of ICD-10, education and training is critical. Organizations will have to create an education/training strategy and a corresponding education and training plan. Each of these may be complex due to the number of business processes impacted by diagnosis and procedure codes and the duration of the effort.
3. **Consider Vendors** – Communication with administrative system vendors is critical and should start early and continue on a regular and frequent basis throughout the transition. Here are a few things to consider when communicating with vendors:
 - Does the vendor have fully functional, compliant products and services which will be available ahead of the compliance date to allow thorough ICD-10 testing?
 - When will upgrades or new systems be available for testing and implementation?
 - Are there any system upgrades/replacements needed to accommodate ICD-10?

- How will the products accommodate both ICD-9 and ICD-10 as needed for services provided before and after the compliance date?
 - What are the costs involved with upgrades and are they covered by existing contracts?
 - What kind of training and customer support, such as avoiding potential reimbursement issues, will the vendor provide?
4. **Create an Implementation Timeline** –The Federal Register Final Rule dated January 16, 2009, 45 CFR Part 162 published a high-level timeline for implementing ICD-10. However, it focuses only on the publishing of the Final Rule, initial implementation activities and the compliance date. While it’s short on details, the industry has stepped up to fill in the gaps. Based on communications from CMS, AHIMA and WEDI, a recommended timeline for ICD-10 compliance can be established.

Activity	Timeline
Education and Training	January 2009 – November 2013
Planning and Assessment	August 2010 – January 2011
Implementation Activities (gap analysis, design, development, internal testing)	January 2011 – January 2013
External Testing	January 2013 – September 2013
Compliance Date	October 1, 2013

Adhering to timelines in conjunction with the activities described will ensure a timely and smooth transition to ICD-10. Awareness, communication, preparation and collaboration are the keys to a successful ICD-10 transition.

For more information regarding ICD-10, visit the Websites listed below:

- ICD-10 General Information at the CMS website: <http://www.cms.gov/ICD10>
- ICD10 Provider Resources: http://www.cms.gov/ICD10/05a_ProviderResources.asp#TopOfPage
- The CMS ICD-10 website provides the latest ICD-10 information and links to resources for providers to prepare for ICD-10 implementation in a 5010 environment.
- AHIMA Resources:: <http://www.ahima.org/icd10>
- General information at the WEDI website: <http://www.wedi.org>
- HC Pro: <http://www.hcmarketplace.com/prod-9042-EICD10T/ICD10-Trainer.html>
- WHO-World Health Organization, ICD-10 Interactive Self Learning Tool: <http://apps.who.int/classifications/apps/icd/ICD10Training/>