

Connecticut Coders Quarterly

Newsletter of the Connecticut Chapter of the AAPC

Spring 2002

Issue 3

...A Note from the President's Desk...

Greetings, we have a busy spring ahead of us. In addition to holding the CPC exam, we have three meetings scheduled. We will most likely take a little break during the summer and resume our meetings in September.

Many of us are also preparing to attend the National AAPC conference in Washington D.C. If you are attending the conference, please stop by and visit our table at the "Meet Your Local Chapter" event on Sunday, April 7th between 5:30 – 7:00 pm.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Smith
President, Connecticut Chapter

Category III Codes

Bev Bakes, CPC & Joyce Dupee, CPC

Are you familiar with Category III codes? These codes were introduced in the 2002 CPT book. According to CPT, use of unlisted codes does not offer the opportunity for the collection of specific data (page 379). Using the Category III codes allows healthcare professionals, insurers, researchers and others with an interest in health policy to identify the performance of these new technologies and procedures, and to track their clinical effectiveness and outcomes.

We are advised to report a Category III code in lieu of an unlisted procedure code, if one exists. These codes have been designed as alphanumeric codes, to set them apart from Category I CPT codes. There are four numeric digits followed by one alpha character ("T" – as in temporary!). A code example is:

0001T Endovascular repair of infrarenal abdominal aortic aneurysm or dissection; modular bifurcated prosthesis (two docking limbs)

Assigning a procedure a Category III code does not mean it will eventually receive a Category I CPT code. After 5 years of use, a code that has remained in Category III will be archived if it does not qualify to remain a Category III code, or if it has not been assigned a Category I CPT code.

New Category III codes will be released semi-annually in the AMA/CPT website (www.ama-assn.org), and the full set will be published annually in the CPT book.

What The Heck IS That?

The Coding Corner for 'Unusual' Diagnoses

By Irma Reyes

Have you ever scanned through your ICD-9 book and noticed a diagnosis or disease and wondered "What the Heck IS That"?

Acrocephalopolysyndactyly 755.55
a.k.a. Apert's Syndrome

Acrocephalopolysyndactyly (Apert's Syndrome) is just one of many strange looking diagnoses, and because I was *so* curious, I decided to share the information I found on my "What Is That" research.

Apert's Syndrome is a genetic disorder characterized by an unusual shape of the head, as well as deformities of the hands.

The premature closing of all of the bones in the skull causes this congenital anomaly. The skull is prematurely fused and unable to grow normally; the midface (the area of the face from the middle of the eye socket to the upper jaw) appears retruded or sunken; and the fingers and toes are fused together in varying degrees. Hand deformities include unusual shortness of fingers combined with webbing, especially between the third and fourth digits.

Treatment of this very rare genetic disorder usually consists of surgical correction.

Apert's syndrome is named for the French physician who first described it, E. Apert, in 1906.

So, check back in the next AAPC CT Chapter Newsletter for "What the Heck IS That"?



Elections – 2003 Officers

Although it is rather early in the year, we have already started to think about the elections for the 2003 officers. At a recent board meeting, it was decided to hold the elections a little earlier in the year (October or November) in order to give the newly elected officers a little more time to transition and plan events for the New Year.

We will begin accepting nominations in June, so please think about whom you might like to see in office, and/or let us know if you are interested in being nominated. The nominations are for President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. This year's President-Elect automatically steps up as President.

Don't worry.....We will still have our Holiday meeting in December!

Medicare Prepayment Documentation Requests

Pat Waleski, CPC & Corrine Gray, CPC

Medicare Prepayment documentation requests, also known as development letters, are sent to physicians to establish medical necessity and to verify appropriate documentation for services provided. Documentation is often requested for unlisted procedure codes and modifiers 22, 52, 53, 62 and 78.

High level E&M services, follow-up inpatient consultations, and for procedures when a local medical review policy has not been determined are also requested. In addition, claims submitted at unusually frequent intervals may be reviewed for medical necessity. You have 45 days in which to respond to the request to avoid denials.

The documentation should be legible and abbreviation keys should be provided when abbreviations are used. If documentation is submitted at the time of billing for the above modifiers and unlisted codes, the prepay requests would be eliminated for these services.



Officers: President – Susan E. Smith, CPC
President-Elect – Corrine Gray, CPC
Secretary – Joyce Dupee, CPC
Treasurer – Christine Hoyt, CPC

Newsletter Staff: Joyce Dupee, CPC, Editor
Bev Bakes, CPC
Lynn Festa, CPC
Tony Fusco
Irma Reyes
Susan E. Smith, CPC
Pat Waleski, CPC

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Bulletin Board

Upcoming Meetings

May 2, 2002 - Thursday

8:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Hope Building, room 110,
315 Cedar Street, New Haven, CT

Speaker: Thomas J. Rutherford, M.D.
Associate Professor
Yale University School of Medicine
Section of Gynecologic Oncology

Topic: Gynecologic Malignancies

CEUs: 1.0

June 11, 2002 - Tuesday

8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Brady Auditorium (B131),
310 Cedar Street, New Haven, CT

Speaker: Judy Harris, Director of Compliance
Yale Medical Group

Topic: Compliance – Game Show Format

CEUs: 1.0

Please contact Joyce Dupee at 203-785-6617 or
joyce.dupee@yale.edu to RSVP for the meetings.

Exams

September 28, 2002 - Saturday

8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Location: Max Taffel Room at YNHH
East Pavilion, 20 York Street

Index #: 20301-2274

Proctors: Susan Smith, CPC
Corrine Gray, CPC

Fall Exam Review Class

TBA (September)

This course is designed for experienced and/or educated coders who are seeking their certification and need assistance in preparing for the exam. This course is not designed to teach coding or coding concepts; however, such concepts will be reviewed in context with the Study Guide. Please bring CPT, ICD-9, HCPCs and CPC Study Guide to class. Please contact Susan Smith for information and registration.