ICD-10 FAQ

How Long Has ICD-9-CM Been In Use?

ICD-9-CM has been in use since 1979 ago and is obsolete. It cannot accurately describe the diagnoses and inpatient procedures of care delivered in the 21st century. The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the international standard.

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What Code Set Does ICD-9-CM Define?

ICD-9-CM volumes 1 and 2 define the code set used to report inpatient and outpatient diagnoses. ICD-9-CM volume 3 defines the code set used to report inpatient procedures.

What Code Set Does ICD-10 Define?

ICD-10-CM (Clinical Modification) defines the code set used to report inpatient and outpatient diagnosis. ICD-10-PCSb (Procedure Coding System) defines the code set used to report facility inpatient procedures.

When was ICD-10-CM Created?

The WHO created the base ICD-10-© in 1994. The Clinical Modification (CM) was added in the U.S. by the National Center for Health Statistics to create ICD-10-CM for use in inpatient and outpatient diagnosis coding.

What agency maintains ICD-10?

The ICD-10-CM code set is maintained by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for use in the United States. It is based on ICD-10, which was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and is used internationally.

The ICD-10-PCS code set is not used internationally and is maintained by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Why is ICD-10 better than ICD-9?

ICD-10 contains an increased number of codes and categories that allow for a more specific and accurate representation of current and future medical diagnoses and procedures.

How Do The Numbers of Diagnosis Codes Compare From ICD-9-CM to ICD-10-CM?

ICD-9-CM contains 13,000 3-5-character alphanumeric diagnosis codes with 855 code categories. ICD-10-CM contains 68,000 3-7-character alphanumeric diagnosis codes with 2,033 code categories.

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How Do The Numbers of Procedure Codes Compare From ICD-9-CM to ICD-10-PCS?

ICD-9-CM contains 4,000 3-4-character numeric procedure codes. ICD-10-PCS contains 87,000 7-character alphanumeric procedure codes.

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What Is The Code Structure of ICD-10-CM?

The ICD-10-CM code structure consists of:

- 21 Chapters
- V and E codes are incorporated into the main classification
- Code Blocks begin chapters
- Valid codes can be 3,4,5,6, or 7 characters (7th character is a code extension)
- The first character is always a letter, and the following two characters are always numbers
- The fourth and fifth characters can be numbers or letters
- In some cases the fifth character can be a dummy place holder, represented by an "X"
- Some modifications are the same as ICD-9-CM, while other ICD-9-CM modifications have been removed
- Injury codes have been expanded:
    - o Fifth digit defines type of injury
    - o Sixth digit defines laterality
    - o Seventh digit defines encounter

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Structural Differences Between the Two Coding Systems

1. Diagnoses Codes

ICD-9-CM diagnoses codes are 3 – 5 digits in length with the first digit being alpha (E or V) or numeric and digits 2 – 5 being numeric. For example:

496 – Chronic airway obstruction not elsewhere classified (NEC);

511.9 – Unspecified pleural effusion; and

V02.61 – Hepatitis B carrier

ICD-10-CM diagnoses are 3 – 7 digits in length with the first digit being alpha, digits 2 and 3 being numeric and digits 4 – 7 are alpha or numeric. The alpha digits are not case sensitive. For example:

A66 – Yaws;

A69.21 – Meningitis due to Lyme disease; and

S52.131a – Displaced fracture of neck of right radius, initial encounter for closed fracture.

2. Procedure Codes

ICD-9-CM procedures are 3 – 4 digits in length and all digits are numeric. For example:

43.5 – Partial gastrectomy with anastomosis to esophagus; and

44.42 – Suture of duodenal ulcer site.

ICD-10-PCS procedures are 7 digits in length with each of the 7 digits being either alpha or numeric. The alpha digits are not case sensitive. Letters O and I are not used to avoid confusion with the numbers 0 and 1. For example:

0680ZZ – Division, inferior vena cava, open; and

0DQ107Z – Repair, esophagus, upper, open with autograft.

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What Classification System Do Other Countries Use For Medical Coding?

All other developed countries use ICD-10. Currently 99 countries are using ICD-10 for both mortality and morbidity.

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Will Experian Health support ICD-10-CM in all of its products?

Yes – Experian Health will follow the implementation of this coding system very closely and will implement ICD-10 according to the CMS prescribed guidelines.

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Will there be a grace period for implementation of ICD-10 compliance?

October 1, 2015 is the compliance date for implementation of ICD-10-CM (diagnoses) and ICD-10-PCS (procedures) codes for services provided on or after October 1, 2015. There will be no delays and no grace period.

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When will ICD-9 codes stop being accepted?

ICD-9-CM codes will not be accepted for services provided on or after October 1, 2015.

Note: ICD-10 codes will not be accepted for services prior to October 1, 2015.

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Will ICD-10 have an impact on Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes?

No, ICD-10 will not have an impact on Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes. CPT and HCPCS codes will continue to be used for physician and ambulatory services, respectively.

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Will there be a cost associated with the conversion to the ICD-10 code Set?

No - There are no customer costs anticipated with the conversion to the ICD-10 code set.

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On claims, may we use the ICD-10 codes before October 2015 if we are ready?

ICD-10 codes must not be submitted for dates of service/discharge prior to October 2015. However, ICD-10 codes can be submitted prior to the implementation for purposes of collaborative testing with payers and other trading partners.

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When will the ICD-9 codes stop being accepted?

As long as the date of service/discharge is prior to October 1, 2015, ICD-9 codes will still be valid. Because of claims timely filing limits, appeals, retroactive coverage and other administrative processes can span the implementation date, the length of time that ICD-9 codes can be accepted will vary by payer.

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Are the ICD-10 code sets final? Will changes be made to them?

Yes. The ICD-10 code set and nomenclature is final. Due to the partial code freeze, as of October 1, 2012, 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.

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How often will the ICD-10 codes be updated?

Just like ICD-9, ICD-10 codes will be updated annually and effective every October 1st.

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Why is there an ICD-11 coming soon? Why not include the ICD-11 codes in the ICD-10 implementation?

ICD-10 was developed and published by the World Health Organization in 1994. The ICD code set is typically updated every 10 years. The US is the last industrialized nation to adopt ICD-10 for reporting diseases and injuries although used for mortality statistics since 1999.

ICD-11 is on the horizon; it is a separate nomenclature of its own and aspires to align with other classifications and terminology standards. However, it too will need to be modified for use in the U.S. before it can be implemented.

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