Monday, October 16, 2023

CPT Changes for 2024: A Sneak Peek

As of October 1, the ICD-10 changes for 2024 became active. But we are still being teased with bits and pieces of the new CPT changes, which will go into effect on January 1.

What we know is that the annual update to the CPT code set created 349 editorial changes, including 230 additions, 49 deletions, and 70 revisions. Although the complete list of 2024 CPT changes has not been released, I have pulled together the most current and accurate information available. In this edition of Coffee & Coding and the next one, we'll preview what's coming for next year.

The good news: Compared to what we've seen in recent years, the changes for 2024 aren't that dramatic. Even so, I can predict that some will create headaches for coders and physicians alike. So, feel free to grab some Tylenol with your coffee, and let's highlight a few of the changes that will most affect providers and their billing.

Covid-related changes

For 2024, more than 50 codes were consolidated to streamline the reporting of Covid-19 immunizations. In addition, RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) now has its own immunization code set. There are five new CPT codes for reporting product-specific RSV immunizations: **90380, 90381, 90683, 90679, and 90678.** These codes will provide better tracking to support data-driven planning and allocation.

Coding/Billing via Time

It took us all long enough to ensure that we were correctly coding increments of time for patient encounters and that the documentation was detailed and accurate. Physicians have been trained to bill within time frames or ranges. For 2024, physicians must begin documenting "exact" time spent—a single total time amount that "must be met or exceeded." Seem confusing? See the comparison chart below:

CODE	2023 "total time … spent on the date of the encounter"	2024 "total time on the date of the encounter" that "must be met or exceeded"
99202	15-29	15
99203	30-44	30
99204	45-59	45
99205	60-74	60
99212	10-19	10
99213	20-29	20
99214	30-39	30
99215	40-54	40

For more information: www.aapc.com/blog/88921-cpt-2024-brings-more-e-m-changes/

Descriptors in Spanish

One of the biggest (or perhaps we should say "weightiest") changes to the CPT 2024 codes is not a code at all. It involves the addition of "consumer-friendly" descriptors in Spanish for over 11,000 medical procedures and services. Providers and health plans will be able to incorporate this verbiage into everything from medical documents to insurance forms, price sheets, and patient portals. Adding these descriptors and making them easier for laypersons to understand will help providers better serve more than 40 million patients whose first language is Spanish. (It will also make the book of CPT codes considerably larger and heavier, so be prepared.)

For more information: www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-releases-cpt-2024-code-set

Next week, we'll highlight changes to telehealth, reporting of E/M services, and proprietary lab analyses, along with deleted codes for 2024.

Got a question about E/M coding? We'd love to hear from you.
Submit your questions by emailing us at coders@calmwatersai.com!

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