

COFFEE & CODING

Monday, October 30, 2023

Halloween Edition: Why Coders and Physicians Shouldn't Be Scared of AI

Halloween week is here, so as you settle in with a cup of coffee, we thought you might enjoy a quick review of several codes that might appear to have been created for Fright Night. We hope you don't have to apply any of these to your patient encounters this week!

F40.218 Coulrophobia

Fear of clowns isn't just a thing. It's also a code. And it's more applicable than you might imagine. According to a 2023 study of adults in 64 different countries, 53% of adults suffer from some degree of coulrophobia.¹

S11.83XA Puncture wound without foreign body of other specified part of neck

Watch out for vampires. (This code might apply to werewolf bites, too.)

R44.0 /R44.1 Auditory/visual hallucinations

If a patient looks like they have just seen a ghost, and not just a trick-or-treater wearing a bedsheet, you may need to record the encounter with one of these codes.

Y93.D Activities involved arts and handcraft

Accidents when carving jack-o-lanterns or using glue guns for a costume? Here's how to code them.

X99.2 Assault by sword or dagger

If one of your patients has an unfortunate encounter with Freddy Krueger, or one of Captain Jack Sparrow's crew, here's your code.

And now for something REALLY scary: Artificial Intelligence

From what we hear around the industry, almost nothing—except possibly the prospect of a CMS audit—strikes fear into the hearts of coders these days as much as two simple letters: A.I.

We encounter this, too, when we attend conferences or deliver presentations for Calm Waters AI. Sometimes, coders are reluctant even to look at the presentation. Once we start asking questions, we discover that many are nervous that AI will take over the coding role and leave them jobless.

So, let me offer some words of reassurance: **“Do not be afraid of AI. It’s not going to put you out of a job.”**

If you’re a coder, you have nothing to fear from artificial intelligence. Instead, both coders and physicians have everything to gain.

For physicians, applying AI to the tasks of applying correct codes and chart leveling can reduce the time-consuming burden of documentation. That’s a huge benefit when you consider that, according to surveys, physicians say that the documentation workload is a leading cause of burnout. As one example, physicians have found that Calm Waters AI saves them two minutes per chart, on average. Over the course of a day, that can add up to 45-60 minutes of time they get back—and can spend with patients instead of paperwork.

For coders, far from replacing their indispensable roles, AI-powered solutions can assist them in their daily functions and free up more time to focus on clinical documentation improvement (CDI).

How? Here’s an example. Our AI solution frees coders from the leveling challenges of E/M coding and helps physicians choose the correct E/M in real time based on their documentation. As a result, it:

- empowers providers to see how their documentation actually meets MDM requirements and immediately make changes to improve overall documentation and patient care; and
- leaves coders more available to focus on other procedures and edits needing review.

Think of it like this: In home construction, nail guns didn't replace carpenters; they replaced hammers so carpenters could be more effective. As long as accurate coding and documentation are essential to revenue cycle management, coding experts will be essential to the success of healthcare provider groups. With AI-powered solutions, physicians and coders alike have powerful new tools that save time and help them build more successful organizations. So don't be afraid; be empowered!

Happy Halloween from your friends at Calm Waters AI!

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



Michelle Sergei-Casiano

CPC, CFPC, CEMC

Senior Manager, Regulatory and Coding Compliance