

New & Excluded Revenue Codes

April 1st Changes!



If you haven't realized it yet, we rural health clinics are strange creatures, which is why we often feel as if we live in a ZOO. The new CMS billing changes, effective April 1st, have added to our craziness. Let me explain. We typically think of ourselves as clinics, but technically we are considered facilities or institutions because of our certification and funding types. Hence, we bill on the UB-04 for our Medicare claims in the same way that a hospital would bill. For hospital billing, revenue codes are an everyday thing. For us, they are new and scary territory! Before the CPT® code requirement, we had learned to cookbook the claims format because it was pretty simple given our handful of revenue codes. Now, we are faced with reporting CPT® and HCPCS® codes with the correct corresponding revenue code. (CPT® codes are a subset of HCPCS® codes, but I am using both terms.)

On the hospital side, each charge item or service is set up with a revenue code that typically describes where within the facility the service was provided. There are some differences between inpatient and outpatient billing formats, but as a general rule the charges are reported in aggregate by the type of service and where it was performed. The category of the revenue code can also correlate with the department of the hospital where the service was delivered. Some revenue codes require CPT®/HCPCS® detail and some do not. For example, revenue code 001x for inpatient room and board charges does not require code detail. However, Laboratory (0300) and Diagnostic Radiology (0320) do require code detail for correct billing. The revenue codes are four characters in length with a leading zero. It is not uncommon to drop the first character in daily use or for our systems to add it automatically.

UB-04 billing standards are written annually by the National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC). NUBC was formed in 1975 to develop and maintain a single nationwide billing form and standard data set to be used by institutional, private and public providers and payers for handling health care claims. A new manual is released each July. Anything and everything about formatting a UB-04 claim is included. It contains a crosswalk which maps CPT®/HCPCS® codes to the most approximate revenue codes. The purpose of the crosswalk is to ensure that the services billed have been provided in a care setting which is consistent with the types of resources which would be normally used. A mismatch could be a red flag for billing errors, misallocation of resources or quality of care issues. Isn't it reasonable that a complicated inpatient surgery would not be performed in physicians' office or radiology suite. Those revenue codes would trigger a mismatch.

During the TA Call last month, some of the examples included revenue codes outside of our normal 052x category. All qualifying visit codes should either be reported with a 052x or 0900 revenue code. Total charges are reported as revenue code 0001. Other services should be reported using any valid revenue code except those which correlate distinctly to an inpatient, ancillary or specialty services which could not or would not be performed in a rural health clinic setting. The excluded revenue codes, 0002x-024x, 029x, 045x, 056x, 060x, 065x, 067x-072x, 080x-088x, 093x, and 096x-310x, represent services and service locations which would be incompatible with the normal medical services provided in our RHCs. The NUBC publication provides specific guidance by all UB-04 field locators and revenue codes. The current version doesn't map a wide variety of codes to the 052x revenue codes so we can expect some additional guidance to come.

Most of us will continue to use slightly more than a handful of revenue codes, but we will need to add a few new animals to our zoo! Examples of some new revenue codes we could include are 0636 for drugs requiring HCPCS® codes, 0300 for lab services, and 042x-0449 for OT, PT, and ST services. Remember that we are still reporting professional services, not technical services, on our UB-04 claims. Life in the ZOO-gotta love it!

Patty Harper
InQuiseek LLC
www.inquiseek.com