

HEALTHCARE BUSINESS MONTHLY

Coding | Billing | Auditing | Compliance | Practice Management



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Advancing the Business of Healthcare

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Hospital claims data impact increases



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My journey into the field of coding is far from the usual AAPC stories. Trained to be a medical doctor in India, I moved to the United States with my family more than 10 years ago.

Early on, I pursued the management side of healthcare business, as I've always been keen on working towards improving the quality of healthcare delivery. To that end, I began learning and implementing Lean strategies in healthcare.

Editor's note: For more information about Lean, read "From Cars to Coding: Lean's Impact on Healthcare Business," in the November 2015 issue of *Healthcare Business Monthly*.

While pursuing a Doctor of Medicine residency in the United States, I job shadowed many physicians in their practices, and came across coding and compliance issues. I learned coding more easily than most because of my medical education, but I found coding and compliance guidelines the most challenging to understand. They are complex concepts, but they are very important for keeping the business of healthcare ethical.

Calling on Clinical and Business Expertise

I enjoy working with clinicians, especially training and giving provider feedback for clinical documentation improvements. With ICD-10, medical documentation needs to be very clear and specific. I have witnessed many issues with the implementation, and I hope the newer generation of medical providers adopt the right practices to document their own work more efficiently. This will improve medical records and the quality of healthcare delivery to the patients that physicians see and treat every day.

I now work as the program manager of risk adjustment and reporting for Community Health Plan of Washington, a non-profit health plan. This job gives me an opportunity to make and suggest improvements in healthcare delivery through data capture of claims and to focus on risk-adjustment. Every day is a new opportunity to figure out how to meet quality measures more effectively and capture the right image of healthcare issues of our Medicaid and Medicare population and to help serve them better.

Always Looking for Improvement Opportunities

There are so many opportunities to improve quality of healthcare just by looking more deeply at claims data. It gives us an opportunity to make small improvements in healthcare delivery that can go so far in improving the quality of life for patients. For example, a timely medical intervention can prevent development of long-term complica-

tions of diabetes, hypertension, renal failure, emergency utilization, costly inpatient admissions, etc. We, as coders and auditors, should make a clear point to our providers to complete the documentation the right way. With accurate medical records, clinicians can fully understand what the patient needs next to mitigate their health challenges, become healthier, and improve their quality of life.

Digging Deep into AAPC's Knowledge Centers

AAPC has been an excellent source of coding and auditing knowledge for me. Attending their webinars and the Orlando HEALTHCON in April 2016 has given me more confidence and knowledge, and has made me more inquisitive about coding, auditing, and compliance. In the future, I wish to work in the field of clinical documentation improvement and quality.



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