Appeals & Future Options

presented by
Harry Goldsmith, DPM

Disclaimer

Harry Goldsmith, DPM is solely responsible for the content and delivery of this presentation so don’t complain to or blame the APMA for any demonstrated insensitivity, poor judgment, unfunny jokes, puns that aren’t punny, or a general lack of good taste. Blame Jeff.

Also, regarding the APMA Coding Resource Center… I have no apologies for promoting it…it’s the best thing out there.
Appeals

• **Specificity** – no shotgun approach
• **Accuracy** – know what you are talking about
• **Details** – it’s all about the documentation
• **Weigh the pro’s and con’s**

Appeals

Know when to fold…
Audits

“The cost of doing business”

From Medscape News: Orthopaedics
Author: Shelly Reese

Lose Yourself in the Middle

Keep your billing in the middle of the bell curve

1. Try to avoid being an outlier

2. Check to see if the payer provides comparative billing services to see how your billing codes compare to your colleagues

3. If you find a problem, address it promptly
Audit Yourself

Conduct internal and/or external audits a couple times a year on your practice

1. Billing compliance and quality controls begin with periodic checks of your coding and billing

2. Frequent mini-self audits allows you to spot problems before they grow unmanageably…and lets you train to avoid them

Find a Problem, Find Out Why

Track down the root cause of a problem, and fix it at that level

1. You need to know if it is a one-time problem or a problem systemic to your practice

2. Use this effort to educate all those directly and indirectly associated with problem

3. You will want to put in place mechanisms to stop the problem, and prevent its recurrence
Quality Records = Credibility

Your medical records must provide an auditor everything need to establish that the service/procedure was done and was medically necessary

1. A quality medical record is your #1 protection in case of audit
2. The medical record must strongly support the performance and medical necessity for your treatments

Find Out What Triggers an Audit

Visit the auditors’ website to look for hints of what they are focusing on

1. The OIG, RAC, CERT, etc. list the issues they will be focusing on, check them out
2. If you find an issue (e.g., surgical procedures) that the auditors will be examining, review any compliance weaknesses you have, and fix them
Know Your Codes & Rules

Check out your payers’ websites for medical policies, coding rules, and benefits

1. Larger payers like Aetna, UnitedHealthcare, CIGNA all have areas in their websites dedicated to medical policy, coding guidelines, take advantage – use them

2. Medicare provides a Medicare Quarterly Provider Compliance Newsletter listing top issues auditors have identified – learn from the mistakes of others

In an Audit, Time Is Your Enemy

When you are notified of an audit or demands, respond...promptly

1. Failing to respond begets refunds and possible more audits

1. Make prompt responses “priority #1” for your office
## Have a Compliance Program In Place

*This is not a suggestion. This is an ACA requirement.*

1. A basic prototype is available through the OIG

2. APMA members have a Medicare Compliance Manual available online that can be modified for your practice

3. If you have a compliance manual or program and have not “visited” it in a while, it may be time to update

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### Questions?
Thank you!
The Cash Practice

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Opportunities
Ingrown Nail Centers, Inc.

- No appointments necessary
- No insurance accepted*
- No high tech
- No need for a large office
- One staff person*
- Only 3 fees
$50 – office visit (no procedure done; ‘definitive’ treatment of onychomycosis)

$100 – nail avulsion (temporary relief ingrown nail) (second one et al, $50)

$200 – matrixectomy (permanent correction) (second one et al, $100)

Ingrown Nail Centers, Inc.

If you work only 4 days a week and see 30 patients a day billing

10 office visits
10 nail avulsions
10 matrixectomies

What is your annual gross revenue?

$800,000

What is your overhead?
Ingrown Nail Centers, Inc.

Ingrown Nail Centers, Inc.

Costco Wholesale

CVS/pharmacy

Easton
Think Opportunities, Think Cash

Thank you

There is no “Ingrown Nail Center, Inc.

Yet