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Sneak Preview for 2019

CPT has started to ‘unveil’ many of the changes that will be taking place as of Jan 1st, 2019 – here are some highlights:

Radiology

By far probably the area that may affect many Orthopedic offices will be the updating to the radiology guidelines regarding ‘official interpretation’. For years CMS, OIG, ACR and CPT has tried to get across the point of what a review vs. official interpretation is, but it appears to continue to hit of deaf ears. Back 2008 the OIG released report OEI-07-09-00450, detailing many of the findings and concerns they had regarding the paying for official interpretations when the lack of documentation was found. CMS has stated that there must be a signed physician order for ALL diagnostic testing, this includes when taking x-rays in your office. There has to be something in the patient’s encounter note for that date of service showing that the provider order imaging of what anatomic location and how many views. This has been an ongoing issue in getting the provider to document these key points, but maybe with these added guidelines they will comply. It is sure that auditors will be looking for the documentation to support the guidelines. Some of the new wording states the images “must contain anatomic information unique to the patient for which the imaging service is provided.”

CPT will also be providing guidelines regarding ‘imaging guidance’ and documentation needed. In the CPT Changes: An Insider’s View 2015 they included recommended documentation when it came to U/S guidance and injection codes

such as 20611. Some of the updated wording is “all imaging guidance codes require image documentation in the patient chart and a description of the image guidance in the procedure note.”

Integumentary System

Biopsy reporting, and documentation is being updated for 2019 in this section of the CPT manual. First codes 11100 and 11101 will be deleted.

Fine needle aspiration biopsies will have a new range of codes. Code 10021 will be revised to say: “Fine needle aspiration biopsy; without imaging guidance, first lesion”. Then added to this family will be new primary codes as well as several add-on codes, 10004-10012. Information will be provided to explain the different between the fine needle aspiration vs. core needle biopsies, as well as guidance for when performing biopsies of different lesions or using two different types of biopsy techniques for the same lesion (e.g. fine needle aspiration and core needle biopsy).

They are also adding different methods of skin biopsies with 6 new codes such as Tangential biopsy of the skin (e.g., shave, scoop, saucerize, curette); Punch biopsy and Incisional biopsy. CPT further defines what a skin biopsy would include such as “with a sharp blade, such as a flexible biopsy blade, obliquely oriented scalpel or curette to remove a sample of epidermal tissue with or without portions of the underlying dermis.”

Musculoskeletal System

New allografting codes will be the first thing that you noticed. Finally, we will have some additional reporting for the allografts that the surgeons are using.

- **New structural allograft codes for non-spinal bone:** You’ll have three new add-on codes (dummy codes **209X3**, **209X4** and **209X5**) to report for the work of templating, cutting, placement and internal fixation of structural allograft for a variety of uses, including:
 - Osteoarticular, including articular surface and contiguous bone,
 - Hemicortical intercalary - that is, partial thickness allograft, also known as hemicylindrical, and
 - Intercalary or full thickness bone allograft also described as complete or cylindrical.
- The codes are for use during bone or joint reconstruction procedures, for example after removal of a bone tumor. They are for use in the facility setting only, the proposed fee schedule states.

EM section

New “interprofessional consult” codes have been added for 2019. It appears that Medicare will pay for these of interprofessional consultation codes on Jan. 1, 2019. The new codes are:

- **99451** (Interprofessional telephone/Internet/electronic health record assessment and management service provided by a consultative physician, including a written report to the patient’s treating/requesting physician or other qualified health care professional, 5 minutes or more of medical consultative time)
- **99452** (Interprofessional telephone/Internet/electronic health record referral service[s] provided by a treating/requesting physician or other qualified health care professional, 30 minutes)

In the proposed CMS Fee Schedule that came out there was reference to some new ‘remote monitoring’ EM services and there was hope that these might work for all specialties including Orthopedic, but the CPT description of these codes are more specified than what CMS had stated.

These codes are:

- **99453** (Remote monitoring of physiologic parameter[s] [e.g., weight, blood pressure, pulse oximetry, respiratory flow rate], initial; set-up and patient education on use of equipment)
- **99454** (...; device[s] supply with daily recording[s] or programmed alert[s] transmission, each 30 days)

The guidelines state: “Codes 99453 and 99454 are used to report remote physiologic monitoring services (e.g., weight, blood pressure, pulse oximetry) during a 30-day period.” There is also code **99457** (Remote physiologic monitoring treatment management services, 20 minutes or more of clinical staff/physician/other qualified health care professional time in a calendar month requiring interactive communication with the patient/caregiver during the month)

Guidelines state: “Use 99457 for time spent managing care when patients or the practice do not meet the requirements to report more specific services,”

Stay tune for more changes for 2019!

Past and current newsletters can now be obtained at www.margievaught.com scroll to the bottom and click on past newsletters.

The newsletters will now start coming out quarterly and if there is ‘breaking’ updates that need to come out sooner, then special editions will be sent.

If you have issues or concerns that you would like further input on, please feel free to send emails to info@margievaught.com. If you would like to schedule any audios or live presentations, please feel free to contact me.

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Check out below for upcoming Audios and Live Presentations

Upcoming Audios and Workshops 2018

Sept 20th, 2018 – Audio –ICD-10 updates and reminders for 2019 for Orthopedic issues– sponsored by <https://www.audioeducator.com/orthopedics/icd-10-for-orthopedics.html>

October 10th, 2018 – Audio –Arthroscopic procedures – Shoulders, Wrist, Hips, Knees and Ankles– sponsored by <https://www.audioeducator.com/orthopedics/arthroscopy-coding-changes.html>

October 15th – 17th, 2018- 18th Annual Advanced Orthopedic Symposium – Hilton Orlando, FL - sponsored by DecisionHealth – 10% discount use code: ASC-Speaker-2018! www.Decisionhealth.com/specialtycoding

October 31th, 2018 – Audio – Shoulder and Elbow Fractures – sponsored by DecisionHealth – www.codingbooks.com

November 5th – 7th, 2018- GAOE – Annual Conference – Omni Amelia Island Plantation in Amelia Island, Florida - <https://www.gaoe.org/annual-meeting.html>

Nov 29th, 2018 – Audio –2019 updates for Orthopedic Issues; Auditing Orthopedic specific EM services; Shoulder procedures - sponsored by www.audioeducator.com

May 3-7th, 2018 - AAOE – Annual Conference – Nashville, TN- Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center - <https://www.aaoe.net/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1107322&group=>