Question of the Week

April 21, 2014

Q: What is the ICD-10 and what is its status?

A: ICD-10 is the 10th edition of the International Classification of Diseases published by the World Health Organization. It is the international “standard diagnostic tool for epidemiology, health management and clinical purposes.” The ICD is designed as a health care classification system, providing diagnostic codes for classifying diseases. LTC facility payment is based, in part, off the ICD codes. We have used the ICD-9 since the 1970’s and those codes have limitations that prevent precise coding and billing of conditions and treatments. ICD-9 provides no information in the five-digit code about anatomical site, severity or risk factors and, therefore, hinders accurate reimbursement. ICD-10’s seven-digit code provides more specific data and better reflects today’s medical practices. The recent Doc-Fix legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President, pushed back the implementation of ICD-10 until October 1, 2015. IHCA will provide educational materials and trainings prior to the implementation date to make sure all IHCA members are informed and ready to implement.