Clinical Social Workers Be Aware: Version 5010 is Coming

Effective January 1, 2012, clinical social workers and other health care providers, health care clearinghouses, covered entities, and business associates who use electronic transactions mandated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), will be required to replace the current software, Version 4010/4010A standards, with Version 5010 standards. Version 5010 updates standards including claims submission and status, remittance advice, eligibility, and referral authorizations. Electronic transactions that do not use Version 5010 beginning January 2012, will be rejected for non-compliance with HIPAA electronic transactions. Rejections include denial of reimbursement.

Clinical social workers are encouraged to transition to Version 5010 prior to January 2012. Doing so allows them to participate in training and testing of the new software and systems to ensure it is working properly before the compliance date. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is assigned by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to oversee compliance of the standards. Currently, there is no delay expected in the implementation of Version 5010.

Changes in Version 5010

Version 5010 brings improvements in technical, structural, and data content and system changes and will improve standards functionality between providers and payers. The software also does the following:

- accommodates the reporting of clinical data of the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM) which is scheduled for implementation on October 1, 2013
- increases the number of diagnosis codes allowed on a claim

Clinical Social Workers Association

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• enhances data collection and transmission
• distinguishes between principal and admitting diagnoses and reasons for service codes
• monitors treatment outcomes and clinical care
• improves claims receipt and procedures
• acknowledges and rejects transactions across all jurisdictions
• returns early in the process claims requiring corrections.

Preparing for Implementation of Version 5010
Clinical social workers should develop an implementation plan for compliance in transitioning to Version 5010. Full functionality is expected by CMS on January 1, 2012. The following steps may help prepare clinical social workers for the conversion:

• contact your practice management and/or software vendor to determine when Version 5010 will be available and installed into your computer system
• contact your billing service, clearinghouses, payers and other covered entities to determine when they will have upgrades completed and when testing can begin
• identify and make any changes that will occur as a result of the new software
• enroll in training courses to become familiar with the software
• conduct internal and external testing to ensure that electronic transactions can be sent and received
• begin using Version 5010 prior to January 1, 2012 to ensure that electronic transactions are working smoothly

Clinical social workers should be aware that successful implementation of Version 5010 will be dependent on when they are able to acquire and install the new software. The amount of time that it takes for clinical social workers to become compliant will depend on the size of their private practice and available resources. To avoid placing themselves at risk for payment denials and other interruptions of services due to inappropriately submitted claims, clinical social workers are responsible for confirming compliance of Version 5010 with practice management and billing services employed by them to perform electronic billing.

Additional information about Version 5010 is available online from the CMS Website at www.cms.hhs.gov. NASW members may also contact NASW for questions at mcoleman@naswdc.org.

Resources
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- Presenting Your Work to Others
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- Strengthening Your Writing Skills: An Essential Task for Every Social Worker
- The Tech-Savvy Social Worker: Prepared for the Challenges of 21st Century Practice
- The Value of Dual Degrees

New Practice Standards

For a complete list of practice standards, visit www.socialworkers.org/practice/default.asp

- NASW Standards for Social Work Practice with Family Caregivers of Older Adults (2010)

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