

Dermatology Coding Alert

ICD-10 Delay: Anticipate 1 Extra Year for Your ICD-10 Implementation Schedule

But don't count on the delay quite yet, expert warns.

As part of a proposed rule to adopt a standard health plan identifier (HPID), **Kathleen Sebelius,** Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary, announced a proposed ICD-10 implementation delay until Oct. 1, 2014.

That would give your dermatology practice a one-year delay from the prior Oct. 1, 2013 deadline.

Change Reflects Provider Input

"Many provider groups have expressed serious concerns about their ability to meet the Oct. 1, 2013 compliance date," CMS stated in a press release available at www.cms.gov/apps/media/press releases.asp.

HHS believes the change in the compliance date for ICD-10, as proposed in this rule, would give providers and other covered entities more time to prepare and fully test their systems to ensure a smooth and coordinated transition among all industry segments, says **Michael A. Granovsky, MD, FACEP, CPC,** President of LogixHealth, a medical coding and billing company in Bedford, Mass.

The American Medical Association, which was a vocal proponent of an ICD-10 implementation delay, cheered the news. "The American Medical Association and physicians across the nation appreciate that CMS has proposed delaying the ICD-10 implementation date to October 1, 2014," said **Peter W. Carmel, MD,** the AMA's president. "The postponement is the first of many steps that regulators need to take to reduce the number of costly, time-consuming regulatory burdens that physicians are shouldering."

Caution: Rule is 'Proposed,' not 'Final'

Don't write the new ICD-10 deadline in pen quite yet. "ICD-10-CM is not delayed until October 1, 2014," **Lisa Selman-Holman** with Selman-Holman & Associates and CoDR -- Coding Done Right in Denton, Texas, notes on her blog. The new deadline is merely a proposal. "The healthcare industry has the opportunity to comment on the proposal and then CMS can publish a final rule."

The billions this delay is expected to cost providers may stymie the delay. "Only time will tell," Selman-Holman says.