Wrap things up and ready for ICD-10

Three more months until ICD-10 GO-LIVE. In most clinics, the ICD-9 to ICD-10 codes have been translated in Electronic Health Record. The ICD-10 is much more specific than ICD-9. Therefore, the provider’s documentation will have to contain much more specificity in order for the coder to assign the correct codes for a condition.

Documentation requirements:

- **Specificity:**
  Laterality – The addition of laterality into the code set is one of the reason for the increased number of code in ICD-10.
  Example: In ICD-9 451.81 Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis
  In ICD-10 I80.211 Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis of right iliac vein
  I80.212 Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis of left iliac vein
  I80.213 Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis of iliac vein, bilateral
  I80.219 Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis of unspecified iliac vein

- **Time Parameters:**
  Acute
  Chronic
  Acute on Chronic
  Recurrent

- **Site-** Many codes in ICD-10 have site specificity, including:
  Atheroembolism
  Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis
  Embolism and thrombosis
  Varicose Veins

From the CMS - Hierarchical Condition Categories (HCCs)
- A coder needs to assign the correct code for a condition and have it map to the correct HCC to determine accurate reimbursement.
- Non-specific code will not map to HCCs with the same weight (if at all).
- There will be closer scrutiny of HCC coding with implementation of ICD-10 and also more insurers will be using the risk adjustment methodology for payment.

Knowledgeable providers and coders will be crucial to proper reimbursement and the integrity of the data being submitted to CMS.

CMS prefers contemporaneous documentation to support coding, however, if reliable information from an earlier record establishes the basis for continuing the care plan, it can be used as long as the current diagnosis is addended to it.
To assist the physician with the documentation, a coder should, if necessary, get at least 5 to 10 diagnosis codes and sit down with the physician and ask what is needed for each specific diagnosis, depending on specialty.