



news

233 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Fl.
Chicago, IL 60601

phone >>(312) 233-1100
fax >>(312) 233-1090
web >>www.ahima.org

For more information, please contact:

Bridget Stratton

Public Relations

312-233-1097

bridget.stratton@ahima.org

AHIMA Calls on Members, Stakeholders to Continue Advocacy to Prevent ICD-10 Delay

CHICAGO – March 28, 2014 – The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) expressed extreme disappointment at the voice vote taken by the U.S House of Representatives to pass the bill that included a seven line section preventing implementation of the ICD-10 code set until at least October 1, 2015. AHIMA is encouraging the healthcare industry to take action to stop the potential ICD-10 delay.

“AHIMA is calling on its more than 72,000 members and other stakeholders to contact their Senators to urge them to remove the ICD-10 language that was quietly inserted into a bill focused on the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) for physicians,” said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. “It is unfortunate that the House of Representatives chose to embed language about ICD-10 into the proposed SGR fix in their effort to temporarily address the long outstanding and critically important physician payment issues.”

The Senate has scheduled the vote on HR 4302, The Protecting Access to Medicare Act, for Monday, March 31, 2014.

AHIMA has steadfastly championed the benefits of the transition to ICD-10. The transition is particularly time-sensitive because of the urgent need to track, identify and analyze the new clinical services and treatments available to patients. ICD-9-CM, which is outdated and imprecise, adversely affects the value of healthcare data and ultimately adversely compromises the quality of patient care.

World Health Organization (WHO) member states have been using ICD-10 since 1994. The United States remains one of the few developed countries that has not made the transition to ICD-10 or a clinical modification.

“The healthcare industry has had an abundance of time to prepare for the ICD-10 transition,” Thomas Gordon said. “Many hospitals, healthcare systems, third-party payers and physicians’

offices have prepared – in good faith – and made critical investments to be ready by the implementation deadline.”

It has been estimated that another one-year delay of ICD-10 would likely cost the industry an additional \$1 billion to \$6.6 billion on top of the already incurred costs from the previous 1-year delay.

In addition to the resources and time that healthcare professionals have put in to prepare, more than 25,000 students in Health Information Management (HIM) associate and baccalaureate educational programs will be affected by the delay. Many of these students have been trained exclusively in ICD-10.

“As the demand for quality healthcare data increases, a delay in ICD-10 implementation will cause the healthcare system to face additional struggles to fill these important HIM positions,” Thomas Gordon said.

For the latest developments, visit the [Journal of AHIMA](#) and follow [@AHIMAResources](#).

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About AHIMA

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 72,000 educated health information management and health informatics professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for high quality research, best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA’s enduring goal is quality healthcare through quality information.

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