



## Radiology Views™ Newsletter – May 2010

### Know Your Audience!

Your radiology report is one of the most critical aspects of the services you provide.

**Clinical Audience:** Includes medical practitioners. Clear communication to the referring physician is the priority because you share in the responsibility of patient outcome. It is also important to remember the radiology report is part of the medical record which can be regarded as a legal document.

**Financial Audience:** Many radiologists overlook the importance of their financial audience which includes coders and insurance companies. Your financial success is tied to how well you document your reports. Coding assignments are based solely on your documentation. Coding assignments determine if and how much you will get paid.

**Common Misconception:** Many radiologists assume that the assignment of codes to their radiology reports comes from what the hospital charged – not true!

**Truth:** PRC Medical coders read every radiology report completely before assigning CPT and ICD-9 codes. Using the codes submitted by the hospital would lead to numerous errors because not every code has both a hospital and physician component and some physician coding rules do not match hospital coding rules. Examples: PQRI, E/M, discontinued services, and reporting rule-out conditions.

**Responsibilities of your Financial Audience include:**

- Assign procedure (CPT) codes and diagnosis (ICD-9) codes based on physician documentation
- Resolve CPT code bundling issues
- Review medical necessity requirements
- Assign Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) codes as appropriate
- Assign correct modifiers (if a procedure has been altered) to reflect the change
- Report informational modifiers (resident supervision, locum tenens, donors for transplants, special programs)

**Summary:**

- ✓ Remember your Clinical and Financial audience.
- ✓ Take a new and positive look at your radiology report from a different perspective.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the CPT code descriptions. Financial audience is looking for language that mirrors CPT descriptions.

**If you have any questions on this or other documentation and coding topics, please call or email Wendy Block, at 330.564.2618 or [wblock@prcmedical.com](mailto:wblock@prcmedical.com).**