

Taking Coding to the Next Level: HIM's Long Coding History Can Help Transform the Industry with ICD-10

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How well the healthcare industry implements and executes the strategic and tactical tasks for the ICD-10 transformation will go a long way in determining the future state and success of the HIM profession. We must rise to the occasion!

HIM's long history of managing and implementing different classifications and nomenclatures will guide us and steer the industry's ICD-10 transition.

HIM's Long History in Coding

HIM involvement with disease classifications and nomenclatures can be traced back to the early 20th century. The HIM profession has been the recognized expert and leader in data collection, classification, and reporting since Grace Whiting Myers, founder of the association known today as AHIMA, served on the Committee on Uniform Nomenclature, which developed a disease classification system based on etiological groupings.

HIM's history is rich with HIM professionals that helped develop the Standard Nomenclature of Diseases and Operations, a forerunner of SNOMED CT. Medical record professionals working in US hospitals in the mid-20th century were responsible for collecting and reporting disease and procedure information from medical records using the Standard Nomenclature of Diseases and Operations.

As we begin the second decade of the 21st century, let us never forget HIM's leadership legacy and apply ourselves to making our predecessors proud of our commitment and continued dedication to the advancement of the HIM profession for future generations.

Ready for the Challenge

HIM professionals have an outstanding track record as leaders in employing classification standards consistently, and we must maintain that track record through the upcoming changes that reflect and support medicine's cutting edge. America needs to be confident that HIM is ready for this challenge.

AHIMA continues to advocate for HIM's full participation as one of many valued professional assets necessary for success in ICD-10 adoption. Keep in mind we will have to walk this path again for ICD-11, so it serves everyone's best interest that we get the transformation process right this time and create a road map as part of our best practice.

As HIM practitioners, we accept this responsibility with great pride and professionalism. HIM professionals possess the skills and expertise to create electronic content of the highest integrity crafted with physician documentation, ICD-10-ready templates, and a focus on the ICD-10 documentation requirements. ICD-10 provides higher quality information for measuring healthcare quality and safety, and we must facilitate the process for accurate and meaningful data collection.

These are exciting times for healthcare and especially for health information. There is so much to do and to look forward to doing as this long-awaited process continues to unfold-in large part due to your participation.

Everyone in the healthcare industry must be united in their approach to ensure the successful adoption of ICD-10. There is no *me* or *you* when the stakes rise to this level. There is only an *us*, only a *we*, and we need everyone to work together and fully acknowledge what every profession has to contribute.

It will take all of us to ensure ICD-10 adoption is done right and on time.

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