

# 5 Steps to take



to prepare  
for ICD-10

## Abstract

In order to reflect advancements in medical knowledge and technology, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has mandated all health organizations begin use of the ICD-10 code set no later than October 1, 2014. This conversion will require tremendous effort from the health care community. The conversion to ICD-10 is daunting. Due to the numerous upgrades that will be needed to both software systems and manual processes, health care providers must begin preparing now. Those who do not take steps immediately put the stability and financial health of their private practice at risk.

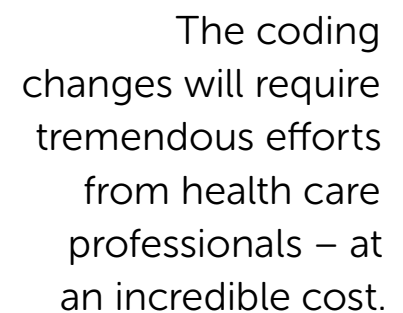
AdvancedMD practice management software is an all-in-one solution for medical coding and billing. has the knowledge and expertise to be your partner during the ICD-10 conversion. With AdvancedMD, you will be able to quickly look up and apply more than 68,000 ICD-10 codes. Creating a comprehensive conversion plan now, which includes implementing sophisticated software, will give you an advantage come the October 1, 2015 deadline.

## The facts & impact of ICD-10

There is no other way to say it: the conversion to ICD-10 is daunting. The coding changes will require tremendous efforts from health care professionals – at an incredible cost.

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the new set of codes to reflect the advances in medical technology and knowledge. The new codes also reflect an increased specificity of procedures. As a result, there are approximately nine times as many codes. Additionally, the specificity of the coding requires more characters in each code.

ICD-10 codes will impact nearly every aspect of your private practice. Don't let your head spin thinking about all you will need to do: take control of your office's ICD-10 conversion today! Developing a comprehensive, proactive plan is critical to the financial stability of your private practice. Are you ready? Learn 5 steps to take now.



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### STEP 1: ASSEMBLE A PROJECT TEAM

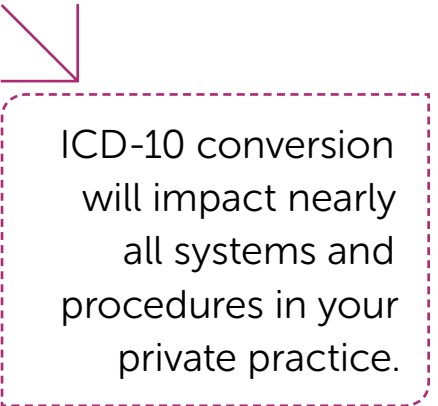
Getting your project off in the right direction will take someone that can shepherd it through each phase of this long implementation. Identifying who will lead your team will ensure that someone has responsibility of keeping you on track and pointed in the correct direction.

You will also need to identify who will be the person that can sponsor this project. You will know if you have chosen the correct sponsor if that person will be able to give you the approval to change office workflows and approve budgets. To use a sports metaphor, think of the sponsor as the owner of the franchise and project manager as the coach. The coach ensures that the team is headed in a positive direction and the Owner signs the checks and approves decisions that will have lasting effects on the ball club.

## /// STEP 2: ASSESS CURRENT SOFTWARE SYSTEMS AND OFFICE PROCESSES IN WHICH YOU USE ICD-9

CD-10 conversion will impact nearly all systems and procedures in your private practice. Make a comprehensive inventory of all areas that will be impacted.

- **Clinical Documentation:** With thousands more codes, ICD-10 requires highly specific medical coding. In order to achieve a higher level of specificity, health care providers must create more detailed clinical documentation.
- **Charge Slips (Superbills):** Any form that lists your office's commonly-used ICD-9 codes must be updated to reflect coding changes. Because ICD-10 forms have a higher level of specificity, these forms will be longer and more complex.
- **Practice Management System:** Your practice management system will require an upgrade to reflect the new coding set.
- **Electronic Health Records:** EHR systems must be updated to accommodate the ICD-10 codes.
- **Contracts:** All contracts with payers need to be reviewed to assess the impact of converting to ICD-10 codes.
- **Public Health Reporting:** After the compliance date, you will need to report public health information utilizing the new ICD-10 codes. Check to see if your reporting system will accommodate the conversion.
- **Quality Reporting:** Consider how your quality reporting is generated to see if your ICD-10 conversion will impact the reporting system or manual processes.



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## /// STEP 3: COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR PAYERS ABOUT ANY CHANGES THAT WILL BE MADE TO YOUR CONTRACTS DUE TO THE IDC-10 CONVERSION

Due to the substantial changes of the ICD-10, payers may adjust the terms of their contracts. As a result, you must be proactive and discover what modifications will be made. The specificity of ICD-10 codes may change the amount you will be paid for each procedure. Additionally, change billing schedules, reviews, auditing, and coverage. Contact each payer to ask if they plan to renegotiate their contracts. If they do, inquire when negotiations will occur and how it impacts payment and reporting.



## /// STEP 4: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CHANGES TO YOUR WORKFLOW AND OFFICE PROCESSES

Maintaining workflow during ICD-10 conversion will be extremely difficult unless you plan ahead. Once you have identified the systems and processes that utilize ICD-9 (step 2), you will need to identify how workflow will be impacted. By taking a closer look and mapping each step of these workflow processes you will be able to better identify which ones and how they will need to change to accommodate ICD-10. There are key areas that need to be addressed first.

- **Clinical Documentation:** Permanent changes will need to be made to capture greater details of patient visits. You must code with the greatest level of specificity.
- **Charge slips:** Forms will need to be update with your practice's most commonly used ICD-10 codes. Because ICD-10 codes are more specific, this could be a challenge.
- **Quality and Public Health Reporting:** Review how you generate reports. Be sure to update any forms or reports that include ICD codes.

## /// STEP 5: CONSIDER TRAINING EFFORT AND COSTS

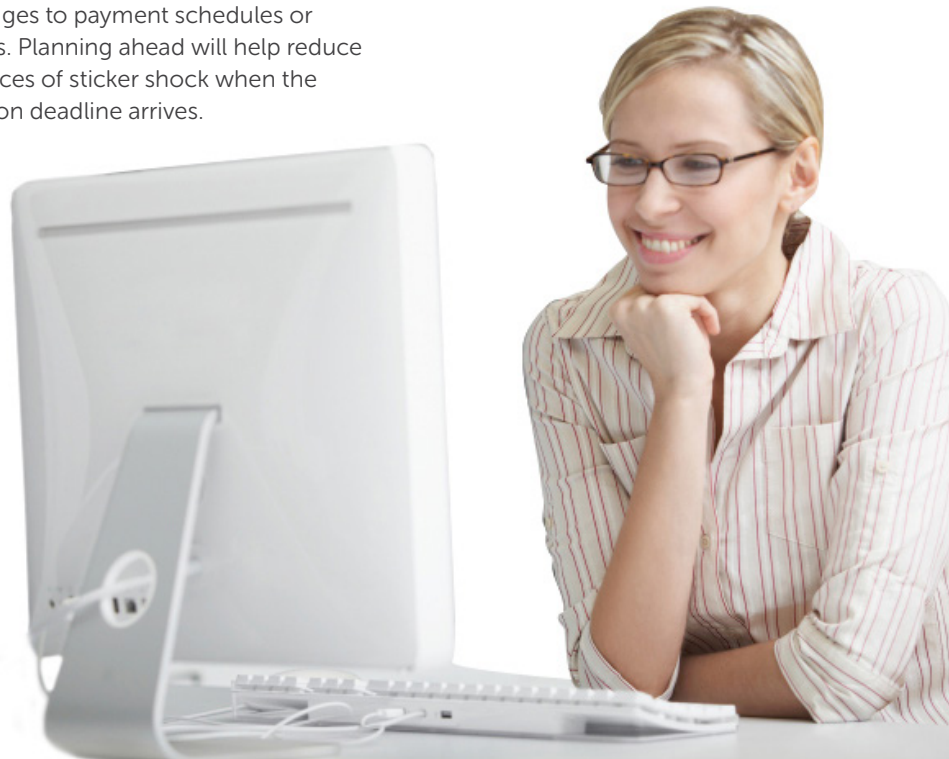
Properly training your staff on the ICD-10 code is essential for a smooth transition. You must ensure that your staff is knowledgeable about the new coding changes and how to use them. First, learn how each staff member uses ICD codes; you will need to determine the amount of training each person requires:

- Administrative staff will need to learn the ICD-10 codes as well as how the conversion will impact office workflow.
- Clinical staff will need to learn the coding changes, but will also need to understand how their documentation will affect the ability to bill.
- Coding and billing staff will require the most training to ensure the new code set correctly records diagnoses.

When designing your training plan, consider all the variables. You must establish when, how, and where you conduct training. Also, you must consider the cost for training and how much 'downtime' your office will experience for training sessions. Because ICD-10 training is so important, taking the time to decide the best training format and plan for your staff is critical to your bottom line.

Correctly budgeting for the change should be a primary concern for private practices and it can be tricky. Look to all the people and areas of your practice that will utilize ICD-10. Be sure to factor in the price of new software, administrative time, software technicians, training, and any changes to payment schedules or contracts. Planning ahead will help reduce the chances of sticker shock when the conversion deadline arrives.

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## > Conclusion

ICD-10 will cause a major shake-up in the U.S. health care community. Nearly every process – manual or electronic – will need to be updated to reflect nearly 68,000 codes. Testing will need to be done with internal software, payers, and reporting before the October 2015 deadline. The process will not be easy, but taking steps now will give your practice an advantage.

Preparing for the conversion is critical for the stability and financial health of your practice. Don't leave the future of your practice at risk by putting off ICD-10 conversion any longer. Start today on your ICD-10 conversion. AdvancedMD can help. We can give your practice a major advantage by helping you:

- Smoothly migrate to ICD-10 compliance with minimal managerial disruption.
- Eliminate the costs and hassles of software and hardware maintenance.

The AdvancedMD My ICD-10 Timeline is a one-stop location for ICD-10 training and education. Our team is continuously posting new resources and helpful progress roadmaps. The month-by-month timeline will assist you in your current plan – or help you get on track!

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