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Compliance Hotline

Type:

<http://157.21.29.163/Compliance/>
and click on Hotline.

EVMS Medical Group Compliance concerns may also be sent to the EVMS Medical Group Compliance Office via phone, mail or e-mail.

Authorizations and Releases During the Pandemic – Electronic Signatures

During the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, healthcare is not the only industry doing a lot of business online and practicing social distancing. Over the past few months authorizations and releases for PHI signed by the patient look slightly different in some cases than previous. As everyone is living in the digital world, there has been a rapid increase in the use of digital signatures and even “audio signatures”. While official government documents must still be signed using an authenticated method, there is some flexibility for releases and authorizations signed by patients.

The first important thing to remember is that not all releases of PHI require a written authorization. In many cases the patient’s verbal request or secure electronic message is sufficient. If the patient wishes for us to release their information for payment, treatment or operations we may do so without written authorization. Examples include a request for the patient’s own record or a request to forward records to an external treatment provider. If we receive a request from an outside entity that is not for treatment, for example records for a life insurance company or patient’s employer, we do need to obtain a written authorization.

Some electronic signatures are obtained via secure systems such as DocuSign. These are generally acceptable, authenticated systems for obtaining electronic signatures. If any case if a request is received with an electronic or other alternative signature type, best practice is to contact the patient to confirm that they did indeed sign “electronically” and would like their records to be transmitted to the designated entity. That verbal confirmation should then be documented and paired in the record with the written request.

Contact Us

EVMS Medical Group Compliance Office

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Norfolk, VA 23508
Phone 451-6200

Link to Policies & Forms:

http://www.evms.edu/patient_care/compliance_program/

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Compliance "Listserv"

Send an email to browerl@evms.edu to request to be added to the EVMS Medical Group Compliance "Listserv". Once you are subscribed, you will receive newsletters, information and training opportunity announcements directly.

Coding to the Highest Level of Specificity

While coding to the highest level of specificity is important for capture of medical necessity and complexity as well as payment and reimbursement implications (HCC coding), there are also other errors that can occur when the most specific code is not used. On occasion a code is used that does not have a sufficient number of characters to be billable. This nonspecific use of codes will trigger automatic denials and delay in payment. This can also occur with authorizations when appropriate diagnosis codes for the procedure in question are not applied.

To assist with accurate and specific coding providers should utilize their coding manuals whenever convenient and also build a robust favorites list in Allscripts with many different options to choose from. When auditing we often find that many providers simply have codes they "always use" and that can lead to errors and delayed or diminished reimbursement. Often, the ICD-10 manual is the easiest and best tool but there are also many great ICD-10 coding apps available for smart phones.

e-PHI Security Tip

While many are working remotely, remember that no EVMS Medical Group information should be stored or saved on home computers or external devices. All users should connect via remote access and save to their usual protected drives.

Lunch Discussion Session June

Topic: Annual Compliance Training

Who Should Attend: Anyone who has not yet completed Annual Compliance Training. All staff and providers are currently being uploaded into a Blackboard course if not already done to take the test digitally. This session will be an opportunity to review the information and questions together and ask any questions.

Date and Location:

Thursday, June 18th, 2020 at noon. This will be a virtual session via Blue Jeans. A link will be distributed to all registered participants.

Please RSVP to Laura Brower at browerl@evms.edu or 451-6202 and feel free to enjoy your lunch wherever you are working!