



HEAL Coalition ALERT: HEAL Coalition Seeks Your Input on ICD-10 Implementation Strategy

Legislation recently passed by the House of Representatives may have a significant impact on allied health programs. A health IT bill (HR 4157) provided an October 2010 deadline for nationwide conversion to the latest version of the International Classification of Diseases. This tenth and latest version (ICD-10) would expand from 24,000 to more than 200,000 the number of billing codes used by physicians' offices and health insurance companies nationwide.

As the new HEAL Coalition begins to develop our legislative priorities and strategies, we want to solicit your opinions and understand the experiences of our members and prospective member schools. We would greatly appreciate your input on how an ICD-10 deadline would impact your school's medical billing and coding programs:

- 1) Does your school(s) currently have the resources (teachers, equipment, curriculum, et al.) to properly train students for medical coding and billing using the new ICD-10 standard?
- 2) What types of resources will be needed for schools to make this conversion?
- 3) How much time will be needed for schools to make this conversion?
- 4) How will the greater number of billing codes in the ICD-10 standard – and the technical skills required to analyze and process them – impact your institution's programs?

Members of the House and Senate are scheduled to meet in the coming weeks in order to pass a Health IT bill yet this year. We intend to use your responses as the basis for our efforts to shape the final legislative product, so that the concerns of allied health schools may be heard as part of the ICD-10 debate.

Congress must be provided with feedback from the private career colleges and schools who will be responsible for helping to implement these changes. We must ensure that as legislation impacting allied health is being developed it is with our interests, and those of the professionals we educate, in mind. Join the HEAL Coalition now, and through effective advocacy we can make a difference!

If you are interested in joining us, or would like more information regarding the HEAL Coalition, contact Executive Director Tom Netting at (202) 626-8553.