

**Welcome!**

Greetings, and welcome to all of our new subscribers! We're pleased to present our October issue, and we hope that you'll find it both useful and informative.

We're very excited about the launch of E&M Coder 7.0, and we can't wait to share all the details about the great new features you'll find in this newest version of our popular coding tool.

Don't miss our article on E&M Code Trend Analysis! You might be surprised to learn how your coding practices compare to national trends, as well as how to minimize the risk of undercoding.

As always, our goal is to provide you, the professional coder, with the tools and tips you need to make your job easier.

*Shirley Moy*  
President  
Spring Management Systems, Inc.

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**Announcing...**

**E&M Coder 7.0**

*"The Ultimate Tool for Professional Coders!"*

Since 1994, E&M Coder has been the market leader as an easy-to-use compliance, audit, and teaching software for Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Evaluation and Management Documentation Guidelines.

Used and proven by auditors, consultants, educators, billers, and as an E/M documentation tool for physicians, E&M Coder determines all E/M levels, E/M codes and provides E/M compliance reports.

Now it's **even better!**

Our newest version, **E&M Coder™ 7.0** is the result of an ongoing commitment to provide our clients with the best possible tool for quick and accurate E&M Coding. We've listened carefully to what you, the professional coder, would like to see in a coding package, and the final result is a product loaded with new features to simplify and improve your job.

Take a quick look at some of the ways our new

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**E&M Coding Trend Analysis –  
"Are You Undercoding?"**

In a recent analysis of Medicare billing data, it was discovered that of over 3900 CPTs charged to Medicare in 2001, the top five were Evaluation and Management(E/M) Codes. In addition, these top five E/M codes represented approximately 12 billion dollars in Medicare charges, or a full *50 percent* of the entire billing for the year!

Interestingly enough, these statistics are not unusual. In fact, the same five E/M codes have been at the top of the list for the past four years, supporting the idea that physician income is, in most cases, E/M code based.

**Top (10) CPT Codes – Medicare 2001**

CPT Code	Description	Dollars Billed	# of Services
99213 -	EM Office Visit	\$4,875,761,305	100,205,122
99232 -	EM Subseq Hospital Care	\$2,383,982,403	41,785,106
99214 -	EM Office Visit	\$2,939,613,677	38,384,882
99212 -	EM Office Visit	\$1,014,363,177	29,668,270
99231 -	EM Subseq Hospital Care	\$858,312,427	24,277,538
93010 -	Electrocardiogram; int.and rept	\$180,606,194	17,082,156
71010 -	Radiologic Exam entire view	\$177,248,948	16,549,937
71020 -	Radiologic Exam entire view	\$289,756,983	15,898,249
85610 -	Lab: Prothrombin time	\$83,159,084	15,370,807
80053 -	Lab: Comp. Metabolic Panel	\$168,443,144	14,350,661

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**E&M Coder 7.0** - continued

product works even harder for you than before!

**New Features:**

- ✓ Current and complete 2003 Evaluation and Management Codes **UPDATED!**
- ✓ **HIPAA Compliant Reporting NEW!**  
A simple checkbox on the Report request screen allows the auditor to temporarily suppress all patient identifying information, producing reporting that complies with HIPAA privacy guidelines.
- ✓ **Teaching Physician Guidelines NEW!**  
E&M Coder 7.0 now allows any facility or practice to be identified as a Teaching Facility. Each patient visit recorded for a defined Teaching Facility may then include the activities of a selected Resident, and CPT codes will be calculated based on compliance with 2002 Teaching Physician E/M Guidelines.
- ✓ **Bell-curve Comparison Graphs by Specialty NEW!**  
Bell-curve Trend Graphs comparing current E/M activity with National Averages may now be requested by Specialty, allowing for a more accurate statistical comparison. **E&M Coder 7.0** makes it even easier to

find out how your practice's coding patterns compare to national trends!

- ✓ Audit Report to highlight visits without a Chief Complaint **NEW!**

Includes all of version 6.1 standard features – comprehensive reporting, full Risk Table for 97 Guidelines, networkable - as well as a one(1) year subscription with free upgrades and free tech support.

To learn more about our products, call us at (800) 585-6337 and one of our helpful staff will be happy to assist you. Or visit us on the web at [www.emcoder.com](http://www.emcoder.com).

Don't wait another minute to see for yourself how **E&M Coder™ 7.0** can make your job easier!

**Subscriber Discount!**

We're pleased to offer a special discount to all of our valued newsletter subscribers on purchases of **E&M Coder 7.0**. Simply mention the following discount code when ordering (**N301090**) and receive a 10% discount!



*“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”*



*-Theodore Roosevelt*

**Pro Coder Tech Tip**

**Teach Your Mouse a New Trick:  
Right-Click!**

In today's software-driven office, the computer mouse is an essential tool for the day-to-day work of data entry and file manipulation. We're all familiar with the process of using our mouse to select, drag, or position the cursor. But do you know about the power of a right-click?

Interestingly enough, even the experienced computer user is often unaware of the advantages of using the right-click button on the mouse to speed up common tasks. In general, the right-click button provides a shortcut to a variety of often-used menu items.



For example, when editing a document in MS Word, a right-click allows you quick access to the Cut, Copy, and Paste menu options, as well as to the Font and Paragraph edit tools.

In MS Excel, the right-click menu includes Cell Formatting, Inserting and Deleting, as well as basic editing.

And when browsing through your file directory, a quick right-click provides access to a wide range of functions, including file open, print, delete, and the ability to automatically send the highlighted file to a zip file or email address!

The best way to learn more about the various right-click functions is simply to experiment. The next time you're using your favorite software, teach your mouse a new trick and right-click!

**E&M Coding Trend Analysis - continued**

In reality, this data only validates what professional coders have known for years; E/M codes have been and will continue to be a critical part of the overall billing process.

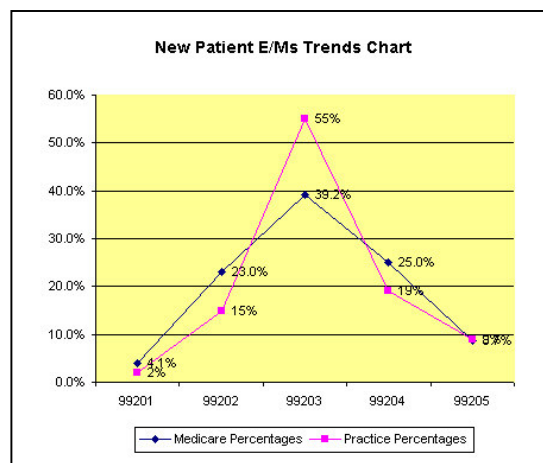
What do these statistics mean to the practicing physician? Essentially, by staying on top of E/M coding, the practicing physician will have a better chance of receiving optimal reimbursement for services rendered. And as a coding consultant or in-house staff member, it becomes even more critical that your coding procedures remain accurate and consistent.

Does your E/M billing correlate to your patient services? Are you appropriately coding the services you provide? If you "under code", you could be losing literally hundreds of thousands of

dollars each year, while "over coding" can put your practice at risk! In addition, if your coding practices are not consistent with similar practices within your geographic area, you may be at higher risk of being tagged as an outlier.

One quick way to determine whether or not your coding practices are in line with others is to compare your code frequency with National Trend data. To help with this, we at E&M Coder are happy to provide to our subscribers a free tool, in Excel spreadsheet format, that allows you to enter your practice's coding statistics, and then generate a quick comparison graph based on National Trends data. To download your own copy of this handy, free tool, go to the following web page and follow the simple directions:

<http://www.emcoder.com/toolsdownload.htm>



The first step in improving the overall cash flow of a practice is to take the guesswork out of coding. By adopting a reliable and standardized process for calculating codes you'll effectively increase the consistency and accuracy of your coding. To more quickly achieve standardization, you may want to consider investing in a reputable E&M Coding software package. A good E&M Coding product will help you to document your charts in a more consistent and accurate way, as well as provide reporting to help monitor your coding activity.

A regular evaluation of your practice's E&M coding patterns and procedures will go a long way towards getting the most from your coding dollar.

**Coder's Calendar:**

**Coding and Billing Seminar**

October 10, 2003

Kings Island Conference Center

King's Island, Ohio

Sponsored by the Greater Cincinnati-Dayton Chapter of the American Academy of Professional Coders. Highly educational event, addressing Coding, Billing, and Reimbursement issues within the healthcare industry today.

For Details: Cathy L. Rolfsen, (859) 371-3436

**Coding Seminar**

October 18, 2003

Austin, Texas

Sponsored by the Austin Chapter of the American Academy of Professional Coders. Annual Professional Coder's seminar, lead by Susan Thurston of the AAPC National Office.

For Details: Terri McNeal, (512) 421-4833

We want to hear from you! Let us know if you have an upcoming event or seminar for the professional E&M Coder and we'll be happy to publish the information in our next newsletter! Send a brief description of your event along with the date, time, cost and contact info to: [emcoder@emcoder.com](mailto:emcoder@emcoder.com), or give us a call at 1-800-585-6337.