

## Happy Holidays!

Greetings, and welcome to all of our new subscribers! It's hard to believe that 2004 is almost at an end. We hope that all of you have had a productive and satisfying year.

In this final issue of 2004, we're pleased to present a variety of articles, including the first in a series on how to build a working mobile office, as well as a report on the exciting new features we have planned for the next version of E&M Coder. We even have a free gift just for you! (see page 2)

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

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

*Shirley Moy*  
President  
Spring Management Systems, Inc.

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## The Mobile Office

We work in an age in which it's possible to take our entire office with us wherever we go. Our ever improving technology provides us with equipment that is both lighter and easier to carry, while allowing all of the power and storage of a basic desktop system.

For the professional Coder, this trend fits very neatly with the growing need for consultants and mobile employees who service a number of offices and doctors. As more offices replace salaried positions with less expensive consultants, the need for good mobile equipment will grow. The savvy coder will be ready to take advantage of this trend by having the tools and the training necessary to take their office with them.

But what kind of equipment should you buy? In reality, it can be an intimidating task to sift through all the marketing hype to determine the most cost effective use of your equipment dollar. Technical descriptions and statistics can be confusing, and in the end you may find yourself with an expensive system that doesn't really meet your needs.

In addition, you need to know where to find the best deals, and how to tell when a "deal" really isn't much of a bargain. In today's world of rebates and discounted packages, it helps to have good resources when making that final decision on what to buy for your mobile office.

In this first of a series of articles, we'll define the

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## Case Study: "Admit from the Office"

By Greg Schnitzer

*Gregory L. Schnitzer is the Manager of Coding Compliance and Quality Assurance for CodeRyte, Inc., <http://www.coderyte.com>*

**Question:** "If the patient is admitted to the hospital from the office, does the office visit qualify as Initial Hospital Care?"

The AMA's CPT Information Services clarified this

issue fairly recently:

"The guidelines for this series of codes [the Initial Hospital Care Codes (99221-99223)] indicate that they are intended to be reported for the \*first\* hospital inpatient encounter with the patient by the admitting physician. This date might \*not\* be the same date as the date the patient was actually admitted to the hospital.

"For example: the physician provides an E/M service to the patient in the office on Wednesday and subsequently admits the patient to the hospital on the same day. However,

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# New! E&M Coder 7.1 30-Day Trial

We're excited to announce the launch of our *free* 30-day trial of E&M Coder v7.1, premier product for the professional Coder! For a full month you can use this fully functional version of our software, without any obligation, and see for yourself just how simple it is to achieve consistent and compliant coding!

We invite you to try it for yourself and discover our straightforward and simple-to-use screens, with convenient drop-down lists and color coded E/M calculations. And you're going to love our reporting, providing a wide variety of comprehensive Patient and Doctor information at the click of a button.

Take a look at what you get!

- Full Risk Table for 97 Guidelines and current 2004 E/M Codes
- Teaching Physician Guidelines HIPAA Compliant Reporting
- Specialty Trend Graphs
- Audit Rationale Note Field
- Flexibility of either Standalone or Network versions
- Comprehensive reporting, including the Patient Encounter (Abstract) Report.
- Visit Note/Audit Rationale Note field.

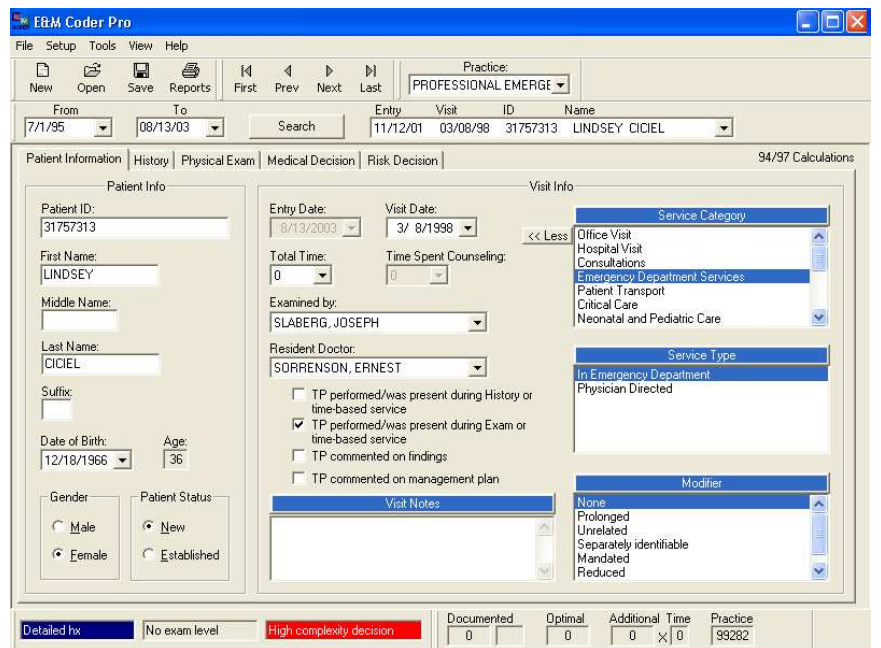
In addition to our complete software package, we'll also provide you with a quick-learn tutorial that shows you how to use E&M Coder and how to get the most out of your 30-Day Trial!

After 30 days you'll be given the opportunity to order and activate a full subscription license, which includes a full year of updates and unlimited support.

Spring Management Systems PROFESSIONAL EMERGENCY CARE Summary of Chart Reviews Date Range: 12/31/1990 to 12/31/2010			
Doctor Name	Practice Charged Fee (Total)	E/M Coder's Documented Difference	E/M Coder's Optimal Difference
RONNIE ARRISTO	\$2,257.00	\$358.00 16%	\$844.00 37%
DELFIN BENJAMI	\$143.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
DONALD BOY			
SCOTT DRON			

Spring Management Systems PROFESSIONAL EMERGENCY CARE Chart Review of E/M CPT Usage Date Range: 12/31/1990 to 12/31/2010						
Patient ID	Visit Date	Practice Charged CPT	Practice Charged Fee	E/M Coder's Documented CPT	E/M Coder's Documented Fee	E/M Coder's Optimal Difference
7851797	10/4/1997	99282	\$93.00	99282	\$93.00	\$0.00
31757313	3/8/1998	99282	\$93.00	99283	\$143.00	\$50.00
31755945	3/15/1998	99285	\$360.00	99284	\$245.00	(\$115.00)
JOSEPH SLABERG			\$96.00			(\$65.00)
						-12%
						\$267.00
						49%



To receive your free copy, visit our website at [www.EMCoder.com](http://www.EMCoder.com). Or, if you'd prefer your trial copy on a CD, we'll be happy to send you one – we'll even waive the \$5 shipping and handling fee if you request a CD by January 10th, 2005!



It's the Holiday Season, and we're in the mood for giving, so consider this our gift to you!

*Happy Holidays!*

## 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 (**N401011**) and receive a 10% discount.

**The Mobile Office - continued**

bits and pieces necessary to build a good working office that can be carried with you. In general, the basic components of a mobile office include the following:

**Laptop:** Your laptop will be the heart of your system, providing you with a built-in screen, keyboard, and data storage. This is also the piece on which you'll spend the most money, so a wise decision on the type and quality of laptop to purchase will be critical.

**Mouse:** Although most laptops have some type of built-in pointer device, many people find it more comfortable to use the standard plug-in mouse. We'll take a look at several "mobile mice" that perform well on the road.

**Power adapter:** There's nothing worse than finding yourself out and away but unable to access your data simply because your battery needs recharging!

**Carry case:** This piece will "pull it all together"! A well-built carry case will make your life a little easier by providing a quick and easy way to store your equipment as well as your important paperwork.



In our next issue we'll give you all the details on how to choose just the right equipment for your specific needs, and where to go to find a good price on that equipment!

## Online Ordering Now Available!

Here at Spring Management we're always looking for ways to make your work day a little more efficient and run more smoothly. And now we've made it even easier to order your own **E&M Coder™ 7.0** - with our secure online ordering option!

Simply go to the Products page and click on **Secure Online Order** to take advantage of this convenient new feature. After your order has been submitted, one of our staff will call to confirm your order, and to verify your shipping address. It's that simple!

**Case Study - continued**

the physician does not have an inpatient encounter with that patient until Thursday morning. In this example, the appropriate Office or Other Outpatient Services Code (99201-99215) is reported for the E/M service provided on Wednesday. The date of service for the Initial Hospital Care will be Thursday's date--the date the admitting physician had the first hospital inpatient encounter with the patient."

It helps if the physician thinks of the Initial Hospital Care Codes as the "first time you visited the patient in the hospital" codes, rather than as "admit codes." Thinking of them as "admit" codes can confuse the physician into erroneously thinking that the codes should be used when an admit took place even though a hospital inpatient encounter had not yet happened.

*The previous discussion thread was originally posted on [www.codingandreimbursement.net](http://www.codingandreimbursement.net), an excellent resource site for coding professionals, and was reprinted by permission and submitted by:*

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## FREE Toolbox!

As a subscriber to our newsletter, you are qualified to receive a variety of free tools designed to help you compare your Practice statistics to National data. Currently our tool list is as follows:

- **E/M Trends Comparison** - Allows you to compare your code frequency with National Trend data.
- **E/M Growth Comparison** - Compare your own Practice's growth with National figures.
- **E/M Fee Trends Tool** - Compare your Practice billing info with national Medicare figures.

To get your free tools, visit us on the web at:

<http://www.emcoder.com/emcodernewsletter.com>

## E&M Coder - New Features in 2005

As promised in our last issue, the team here at Spring Management Systems is ready to announce a few of the new features planned for our upcoming v8.0 release!

Based on research and input from working Coders like yourself, we've come up with the following list of updates to make E&M Coder even better:

**Chart Quality Checklist:** In response to requests, we are including an extensive quality checklist in our next version of E&M Coder. This checklist will allow you to define, track, and report on a wide variety of quality control items, including those associated with the Medical record, the Encounter record, CPTs, ICD9s and Billing. So, for example, you will be able to indicate at a Visit level whether or not the medical record was legible, and if the Patient information was complete. Or, you can track the specific CPT and ICD9 codes billed, and whether they were accurate.

In addition, new reporting will be provided to allow a quick summary of the various quality control items by Patient, by Doctor, or by Practice. Our goal is to provide you with a powerful yet flexible auditing tool that can help spotlight areas within the process that need improvement.

**Consult Verification:** New fields have been added to E&M Coder v8.0 that allow consult verification. By documenting consult requests, return letters, and whether or not the Visit represents a transfer of care, the system will automatically determine whether or not the Visit qualifies as a Consult.

**Visit Delete Function:** Our upcoming version of E&M Coder will allow you to quickly flag visits as "deleted", eliminating them from on-screen displays and from all reporting. We'll also allow you to "un-delete" those same records just as easily, bringing them back for historical review and reporting as needed.

**New Reports:** In addition to our new Chart Quality reporting, we'll also be offering an even greater variety of comparison graphs to improve your ability to focus on the activity of specific Doctors and Practices. We're also going to provide more control over our current reporting, including a new selection of sort options based on feedback collected from professional Coders.

This is just a sampling of the new features we're working on for E&M Coder v8.0 - we have many more wonderful additions and improvements planned as well! We're very excited about this newest version of our Professional Coder's software and we're looking forward to giving you all the details early in 2005. Stay tuned!



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### Upgrade your E&M Coder now and get:

- Complete 2004 Evaluation and Management Codes
- Teaching Physician Guidelines
- HIPAA Compliant Reporting
- Bell-curve Comparison Graphs by Specialty
- Audit Report highlighting Visits without a Chief Complaint

*And much more...*

Call us at 800-585-6337 to order your upgrade today!