

ABSTRACT

CONTENT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF CODING TRAINING IN FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

Reporting of disease and medical services in the United States and around the world depends largely upon the use of diagnostic and procedural codes. Physicians play key roles in the coding process, and may be held to strict standards for accuracy in a variety of ways. An alarming lack of coding accuracy, particularly among Family Physicians, indicates that there may be inadequate resident coding training, despite being a program requirement. This can negatively impact individual and public health care in a variety of ways.

A survey was made of the methods and materials of coding training used in Family Medicine Residency Programs, and residents completed a coding test to determine whether their coding skills improved in 3 years, or whether specific training showed measurable benefit. Analysis failed to show a benefit from most resident coding training, indicating that it remains inadequate, despite numerous requirements and resources designed to support it.

John Eric Sandhusen
December 2006