

# CARIBBEAN <sup>BIG</sup> BUSINESS

## PROFILES

PHARMACEUTICAL & HEALTHCARE



## H.I.M. ON CALL helps healthcare facilities tackle complex ICD-10 coding issues

BY B.G. DOYLE

When it comes to running a hospital or healthcare center, the proper use of ICD (International Classification of Diseases) codes is crucial to the institution's revenue cycle, clinical processes, research, payment systems and comparative disease reporting. Unfortunately, many of Puerto Rico's hospitals aren't adequately experienced or properly staffed to work with the current ICD-9 platform. As a result, an institution's production rate and cash flow can be affected significantly.

Providing many of the island's major healthcare facilities with much-needed expertise in medical coding, clinical data quality and documentation improvement since 2004, H.I.M. ON CALL Inc. is a leading technology-driven medical coding and auditing service company that currently works with hospitals and large physician groups throughout the world. In addition to Puerto Rico and the mainland U.S., this includes clients in India, the United Arab Emirates and elsewhere. "With over 50% of hospital coding departments understaffed, our services are in very high demand," said Manny Peña, the company's president & CEO. "And

because technology is an important component in the delivery of our coding and auditing services, these tools allow us to seamlessly manage the complete flow—from coding, auditing and direct electronic submission to a hospital's billing system, to analyzing the data and providing educational data sessions." He also added that clients have remote access to experienced and qualified coders anywhere in Puerto Rico, the mainland U.S. and other parts of the world as well.

Among the latest applications introduced to hospitals in Puerto Rico, the MyDRGCMC coding analytics system allows H.I.M. ON CALL to quantify and benchmark a hospital's data and compare it with CMS (Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services). This includes the creation of profiles by medical services and physicians, along with CMI (Case Mix Index) profiles by diagnosis-related groups (DRGs), diagnosis and procedures. "Based on this data, clinical documentation topics are identified for discussions with the hospital's medical staff, given that any improvement can result in positive cash flow for the hospital," added Peña. To continually add value to its offerings, the company recently included quarterly educational sessions free of



*Manny Peña, president & CEO of H.I.M. ON CALL*

charge. During these sessions, various clinical documentation topics are identified for discussion with the hospital's medical staff.

With the looming switch to the new, more complex ICD-10 platform, which must be implemented by Oct. 1, 2014, Peña pointed out that hospitals that are already over their heads in coding issues may be forced to invest heavily in both retraining their current staff and hiring additional resources to backfill for training efforts. "In addition, they will have to collect data in

ICD-10 [format] before the cutover to analyze any documentation or payment gaps, and also revamp their IT [information technology] systems and redesign their workflows," he said. "Many hospitals can expect to see a reduction of about 50% in coding production; and according to our ICD-10 Preparedness Calculators, the cost for a midsize facility can be anywhere from \$4.2 million to \$5.6 million, depending on their ICD-10 preparedness plan. This should be a major concern for Puerto Rico's hospitals at this time."

However, the good news is that H.I.M. ON CALL is already well-positioned to assist local hospitals with the ICD-10 implementation, with hundreds of coders already available to serve local clients. "This would assure hospitals an uninterrupted and continuous medical coding process and minimal delays in reimbursement," Peña said. "By having H.I.M. ON CALL as part of the hospital's team, we will be in the position to assist hospitals prepare for the pending ICD-10 implementation and help them avoid a negative impact on their revenue by ensuring timely planning, processing and submission of ICD-10 coding data, which is required by all medical plans." ■



### H.I.M. ON CALL is ICD-10 Ready

H.I.M. ON CALL is currently performing dual coding for "ICD-9" and "ICD-10" in order to provide our clients with:

- Documentation Deficiencies
- Financial Impact
- Education Opportunities
- Productivity Impact

T. 610.435.5724 Ext. 112 C. 610.417.5300 F. 610.465.8659  
 manny.pena@himoncall.com  
 www.himoncall.com