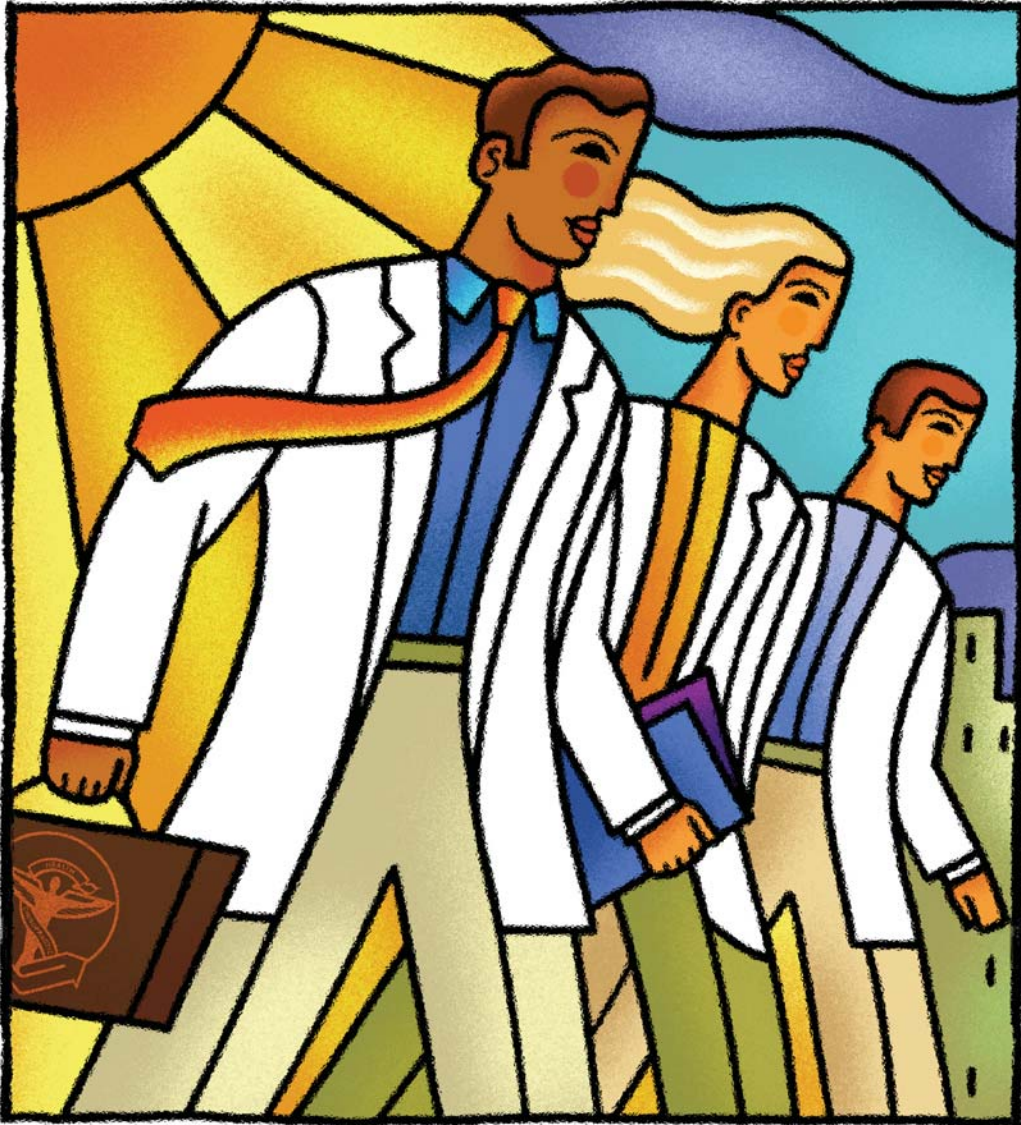


LOGAN SPEAKS

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LOGAN
COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC

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The Logan College Student
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Doctor **TO** Doctor



Logan College and the Logan Alumni Association have partnered to launch *Doctor to Doctor*, a practice tips section featuring effective practice management methods from successful DCs. *Doctor to Doctor* is spearheaded by Dr. Ralph Barrale, dean of postgraduate education, and Dr. Patrick Browne, vice president of academic affairs. If you would like to submit a practice tip to *Doctor to Doctor*, please contact Dr. Barrale at 800-782-3344, or email your tip to tower@logan.edu.

John Davila, DC, is an expert in documentation and medical necessity. He is an educational and professional consultant with a Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Palmer College of Chiropractic. He was recognized by the South Carolina Chiropractic Association (SCCA) as its Chiropractor of the Year in 2000, 2001 and 2002, making him the second person ever to win the association's award three years in a row. Dr. Davila has published a workbook titled *Insurance Compliance* in addition to several articles on medical insurance, necessity and documentation. Dr. Davila can be reached at compliance@daviladc.com, or 800-865-9003.

Q&A for the Bulletproof Practice: Important Questions You Must Ask About Your Practice

Part 2 Getting Ready for 2010



Many chiropractors are unaware that there is a huge clock ticking down, and when the clock strikes midnight, the game will change forever. Changes in the compliance rules are coming in 2010 and your practice must change, too. Will you be ready?

Q What are Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs) and how will they impact your practice in 2010?

A Recently, CMS announced that Recovery Audit Contractors, or RACs, will become a permanent fixture on the Medicare landscape.

RACs are contractors that statistically analyze past “paid” claims in the Medicare system to judge the claims for necessity, documentation and billing errors. If an RAC determines that you were overpaid you will be directed to repay the overage you collected. In some cases, the RAC will directly refer the case to the U.S. Attorney General for investigation, and recovering overpaid money is big business. Since Daniel Levinson became the Inspector General in 2004, his office has recovered \$36.6 billion in Medicare overpayments. As health care providers in the Medicare system, chiropractors are “on the radar” at the U.S. Attorney General’s office and we should prepare for what comes next—even greater scrutiny of all Medicare claims.

Q What is the #1 most over-paid service that is reviewed?

A After taking a close look at Medicare’s May 2007 Report on Improper Fee for Service Payment, I found a few interesting facts about the rules under which RACs operate. Did you know that the most overpaid services are E/M codes? The problem is that RACs are not permitted to audit miscoded E/M codes (for instance, billing for a level-4 visit when the medical record only supports a level-3 visit). With the removal of E/M codes from the review process, chiropractic services then become the priority target because of the high noncompliant error rate.

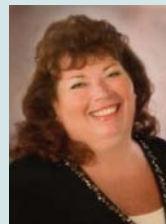
Q The year 2010 is a long way off. Why should I care now and what does “my tail” have to do with it?

A While the year 2010 seems a long way off, it is actually only 30 months away and you will need every second to get ready for what comes next. With the Office of Inspector General (OIG) determined to stop improper payments cold, we must take action to remain one step ahead. The good news is that since implementation is still 30 months out you can repair your “billing tail.”

Your “billing tail” is the length of time your claims can be reviewed after they have been paid by the carrier. In most cases, major medical contracts allow for 60 months and Medicare allows for 84 months from the date the check was cashed for the service. Imagine what the insurance company would find in your practice. Recently, my clients have seen the average post-payment audit go back an average of 24 to 30 months. If you look at the claims you send out today without performing your own internal review, be prepared to revisit them in 2010.

With only 30 months to go, now is the time to start building a Bulletproof Practice to protect your practice and your way of life. With proper planning you can shorten your “billing tail” from 60 to 84 months to 90 days. Plus, you can be prepared to fix billing problems before they become part of an extrapolated audit by an insurance carrier. So, if you start the process now, your clinic will have only a 90-day tail when this demonstration project becomes a reality nationwide in 2010.

The first step in creating the Bulletproof Practice is to visit www.oig.hhs.gov/authorities/docs/physician.pdf. Here you will find guidance on how to create and implement your own corporate compliance program along with the rules on how to perform your own internal audit. The key is to follow the instructions and perform quarterly audits of your billing and documentation so that you know what to change before it becomes a major problem.



Why I Adjust

As I contemplated the question of why I adjust, some obvious answers come to mind. This is what I am trained to do. This is my profession. Chiropractic works. It gets results and helps people get well.

More importantly, I have been given an opportunity to serve others by administering chiropractic adjustments that restore and balance nerve flow to all parts of the body.

I have always been appreciative of how our bodies respond to chiropractic care—how the body uses and distributes the energy released by the chiropractic adjustment to establish harmony within.

By giving an adjustment, I know I am helping make a difference in my patients’ health and well being.

*“As it is above...so it is below;
as it is within...so it is without.”*

Angela Foster, D.C.
Logan Graduate, December 1983
Logan Alumni Board Member