

SYNERGY REPORT

SRA Supports Referring Practices with ICD-10 Implementation

ICD-10 is now a reality in daily medical practice. The International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Clinical Modification – known as ICD-10-CM – is a revision of the ICD-9 medical code set used to classify all diagnoses, symptoms and procedures performed in hospitals, imaging centers and physician practices.


Mandated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), ICD-10 is being simultaneously implemented by private insurers; it greatly expands the current list of 14,000 diseases, conditions and related diagnosis codes to nearly 70,000 codes.

The coding upgrade represents yet another challenge facing radiology and health care. Medicare claims with a date of service on or after October 1, 2015, will only be accepted if they contain a valid ICD-10 code. However, on a positive note, CMS is giving providers additional ICD-10 guidance after October 1 as well as some wiggle room to help during the transition.¹ To help ease the transition for our referring physicians, SRA is sponsoring 18 different ICD-10 educational meetings at each of our imaging departments specifically for our techs and support staff, who interact daily with referring offices.

“We’re prepared for ICD-10 and ready to assist our referring physician practices with proper documentation and coding to help ease the workflow, reduce stoppages and call backs, and ensure proper authorization and reimbursement,” said Synergy Radiology Associates ICD-10 Champion Radiologist, Charles Soderstrom, M.D.

Because ICD-10 requires a much greater level of detail than the previous iteration, SRA is also providing referring physician offices with a series of ICD-10 guides to assist in proper initial coding of imaging studies, including musculoskeletal, cardiorespiratory, gastrointestinal/genitourinary, neoplasms, a technologist guide and an ER guide. Furthermore, the new coding system will directly impact quality measurement, including disease reporting, research, reimbursement and performance payments.²

As discussed in this issue’s clinical decision support article, both ICD-10 and our Synergy Physician Imaging Guidance App comply with the broader goals incorporated into CMS standards intended to facilitate appropriateness of ordering information between providers and patients, which will ultimately support better care.

As always, at SRA, we’re committed to continually working to provide our referring physician community and their patients with the most valuable and highest quality imaging expertise and support during these complex and challenging transitions facing health care. 

¹ “CMS and AMA Announce Efforts to Help Providers Get Ready For ICD-10 Frequently Asked Questions.” Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/Downloads/ICD-10-guidance.pdf>. Accessed October 5, 2015.

² “Meaningful Use Stage 2: A Giant Leap in Data Exchange.” HealthITBuzz. August 28, 2012. <http://www.healthit.gov/buzz-blog/meaningful-use/meaningful-use-stage-2> Accessed September 30, 2015.

ICD-10 INFORMATION GUIDE FOR CLINICAL IMAGING CARDIORESPIRATORY

ICD-10-CM requires a greater level of detail than was required in ICD-9-CM. The following are examples of key items that must be addressed in ICD-10-CM effective 10/1/15. Just a little extra time, spent to accurately convey a complete history and indication for the requested imaging study, will help to achieve the most accurate and pertinent results from the exam. The clinical history must include the signs and symptoms that prompted the study request. In addition, please state the clinical question/concern or “rule out.” Having this information is necessary to reach our goal – to give ordering providers and their patients the most value and highest quality for their imaging needs.

Location
• Chest pain: precordial, painful respiration, intercostal pain or other
• “Lump pain” and/or “heaviness swelling”
(i.e., imaging to rule out DVT or other circulatory condition)

Laterality: Specify location as below and indicate laterality (right, left, bilateral)

SELECT LIMB	UPPER LIMB	LOWER LIMB
SELECT LOCATION	o UPPER ARM o FOREARM o HAND o FINGERS	o THIGH o LOWER LEG o FOOT o TOES
SELECT LATERALITY	Right, Left or Bilateral	Right, Left or Bilateral

Severity
• Acute vs. Chronic (if specific details are known at time of request, please include)

• Heart failure when known, provide type and status. Type is left ventricular, systolic, diastolic and combined. Status is acute, chronic or acute on chronic.
• Venous embolism and/or thrombosis (specify acute or chronic condition if known)

Context
• Provide any already known underlying disease or known history:

– hypertension vs. hypertensive heart disease
– hypertension vs. hypertensive chronic kidney disease (CKD)
• Concurrent conditions (i.e., atherosclerosis with pain at rest)
• Provide specific manifestations of late effects

EXAMPLES:

EXAM REQUEST	CLINICAL INDICATION
Lower extremity venous duplex ultrasound	Right lower leg calf pain and swelling for a week, RVO DVT
Chest X-ray, PA and Lateral	Cough with painful respiration chest pain

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SRA Supports the Power of Pink

Synergy Radiology Associates is a proud sponsor of the 5th annual Pampered Pink fundraiser on behalf of the HCA Clear Lake Breast Diagnostic Center. The gala was held Friday, Oct. 16, 2015, at the South Shore Harbor Resort & Spa, 2500 South Shore Blvd., in League City. As a title sponsor of the event, Synergy's donation helps provide financial support to women in the Bay Area undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

"The Power of Pink" was the theme for the 2015 event, which included a cocktail hour, silent auction, entertainment and a sit-down dinner hosted by Gloria Dei, Bosom Buddies. SRA's own Dr. Reena Vashi, who specializes in breast imaging, presented a special toast.

Please reach out to Joni Faas at jfaas@amedhealthcare.com for more information about the Pampered Pink fundraiser or to help support this great cause. 



HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: **Staying Ahead of the Clinical Decision Support Curve**

The federal government has actively promoted the importance of information technology and electronic health records (EHRs) for more than a decade, dating back to President George Bush's 2004 health information technology¹ plan to incentivize the adoption of EHRs while simultaneously addressing preventable errors, quality care and rising costs.



EHR adoption and the implementation of Clinical Decision Support (CDS) systems are critical components of continuing health information technology improvement under today's Affordable Care Act provisions. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report, "CDS provides clinicians, staff, patients and other individuals with knowledge and person-specific information...to enhance health and health care, and CDS is a centerpiece of the agency's original meaningful use requirements for EHRs."²


Synergy Radiology Associates is working hard to stay ahead of CDS implementation requirements with the launch of its new referring physician application for procedure-ordering guidance.

Both our physician application and CMS's new ICD-10 coding requirements fall under the broader goals incorporated into CMS standards³ intended to enhance the

appropriateness of ordering between providers and patients to support better care. Primary care physicians and other eligible providers receive incentives (as well as penalties in the form of reduced payments) depending on their level of compliance with CMS standards.

The Synergy Radiology Application for Imaging Guidance (SRA physician app) serves as a guidance tool for physicians ordering radiology exams from the facilities where SRA practices. The app simplifies the ordering process and provides clear, concise guidelines and recommendations, helping our referring physicians to quickly and automatically refer the right test to the right location. The SRA physician app further helps to meet an important goal of CDS implementation by providing exam prep information, accurate CPT codes and any special instructions that the patient would need to follow.³

The SRA physician app can be accessed from any web-enabled device – including desktop, laptop, tablet and smartphone – at synergyrad.org/app. Immediate access is granted by filling out a very brief form with physician name, practice, email address and location.

Using the new app, physicians can also find SRA contact information, including a direct line to the radiologist on duty as well as phone numbers and addresses for all of the locations we serve. The app provides a quick link to the radiologist hotline (713-621-1103), available for users during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It also provides a resource for users to reach a subspecialty radiologist to ask questions or request guidance. 

¹ Transforming Health Care: The President's Health Information Technology Plan.

² HealthIT.gov: Policymaking, Regulation, & Strategy; Clinical Decision Support (CDS).

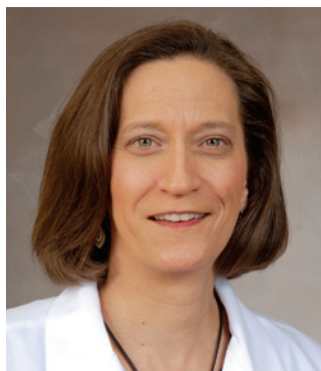
³ Meaningful Use Stage 2: A Giant Leap in Data Exchange. HealthITBuzz.

UNSUNG HEROES

Synergy Radiology Mammographers

For each edition of the Synergy Report newsletter, we select a member(s) of our radiology team whose passion, experiences and unique contribution to radiology makes them “unsung heroes.” In this newsletter, we’d like to recognize our **entire team of fellowship-trained mammographers** who are **saving lives every day** by catching breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages.

Hats off to this edition’s unsung heroes making a difference in the lives of the women in our communities every day:



Beverly Dreher, M.D.

Dr. Beverly Dreher is passionate about the importance of early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer, which offers patients the best chance for survival. Dr. Dreher developed an interest in breast imaging – and discovered she had an eye for reading mammograms – while rotating through different areas of diagnostic radiology during her residency program at the

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. She subsequently earned her fellowship in the subspecialty of Breast Imaging/ Intervention and Body Imaging.

Breast imaging requires direct contact for many patients, particularly in diagnostic imaging and intervention. Instead of simply interpreting images, Dr. Dreher sees the person behind the image; a person with real fears and genuine concerns.

Dr. Dreher loves cycling and competed in the MS150 from Houston to Austin for many years; however, she now spends much of her time enjoying her family.



Reena Vashi, M.D.

After completing medical school at Jefferson Medical College and her internship at Albert Einstein Medical Center, both in Philadelphia, Dr. Vashi moved to New York City for a residency in diagnostic radiology followed by a breast imaging fellowship at Yale University.

For Dr. Vashi, breast imaging enables her to pursue a

passion for serving women’s health needs and playing a role in the early detection of breast cancer. She believes in providing the best care possible and treating every patient as if she were a family member.

Dr. Vashi loves Texas, she loves the great culture, museums and food the Houston area has to offer, and she especially loves sharing these experiences with her family.



Jibi Thomas, M.D.

Dr. Thomas loves solving puzzles – radiology puzzles – which enables him to have a direct impact on patient care.

Born in Pasadena and raised in Houston, Dr. Thomas discovered the magic of radiology in his fourth year of medical school at Texas A&M. He went on to complete an internship in internal medicine and diagnostic radiology

residency. Seeing his mom battle breast cancer and talking through her experiences inspired his decision to earn his breast imaging fellowship at Baylor University Medical Center.

Dr. Thomas is excited to live and work in his hometown, where he feels like he is truly giving back to the community.



Ajanta Patra, M.D.

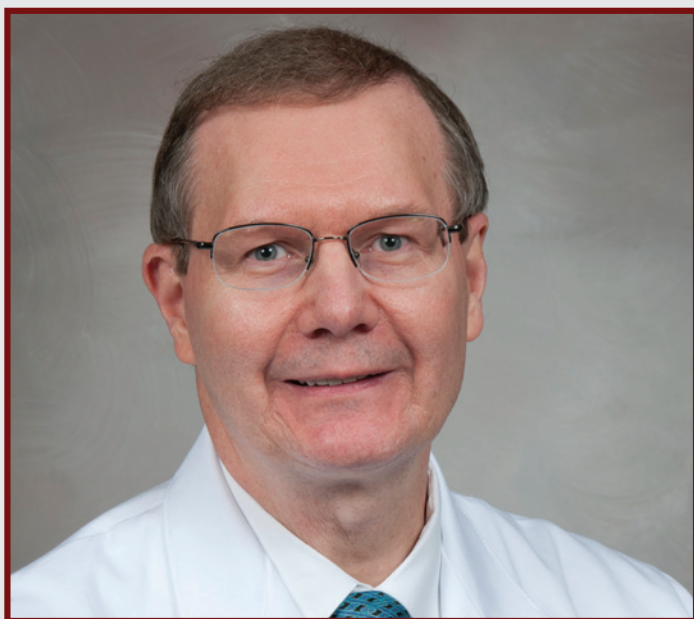
Dr. Patra has a strong interest in women’s health and in being part of a medical community that can impact change. Her residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital and fellowship at Weill Cornell-New York Presbyterian Hospital have prepared her well for the daily challenges she meets at SRA.

Dr. Patra wants to reach her patients in a way that offers

them comprehensive and compassionate care while being involved in the improvements and advancements in breast health that are made every day. Her patients and referring physicians appreciate her professionalism, kind demeanor and wisdom, all rolled into one package.

Outside of work, Dr. Patra spends most of her time with her children, and in her rare moments of down time, she thoroughly enjoys reading and cooking. 🍷

TOP RADIOLOGIST



SRA's Dr. Pohl Recognized as Top Radiologist

Congratulations to SRA radiologist John Pohl, M.D., recently recognized as a top radiologist in Texas by the Leading Physicians of the World. Published by the International Association of Radiologists, Leading Physicians of the World represents the most distinguished and desired medical professionals in more than 100 different medical specialties in all major markets across the globe.

Radiologists are selected for recognitions based on their experience, forward thinking and high quality of care. As leaders in the profession, their biographies are distributed to thousands of medical professionals, health care institutions and consumers around the world.

Dr. Pohl joined Synergy Radiology in 1999 and specializes in diagnostic radiology. His name is listed on the Leading Physicians of the World website and shared with FindaTopDoc.com for patients searching for a radiologist in the Houston/Pearland region. [A](#)

PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT



David D. Lawrence, Jr., M.D.

Our physician spotlight in this edition of the Synergy Report is on David D. Lawrence, Jr., M.D., recently inducted as an American College of Radiology (ACR) Fellow. This recognition is one of the highest honors the ACR can bestow upon a radiologist. Only about 10 percent of college members achieve this honor.

According to the ACR, fellows demonstrate a history of service to the college, organized radiology, teaching or research. ACR Fellowship is awarded to members who are in good standing with the college and have evidenced significant accomplishments in scientific or clinical research in the field of radiology or significant contributions to its literature and/or performance of outstanding service as teachers of radiology. Fellowship is awarded each year to a select group of diagnostic radiologists, radiation oncologists and medical physicists during the ACR's annual meeting.

Dr. Lawrence received his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Medical School at Galveston

after being accepted early out of Texas A&M University. He completed his diagnostic radiology residency at the University of Texas Health Science Center Affiliated Hospitals in Houston. Dr. Lawrence subsequently earned his fellowship in angiography and interventional radiology at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute.

Dr. Lawrence is Board Certified by the American Board of Radiology and licensed by the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners.

He is Medical Director of Imaging and Chairman of the Radiology Service at Memorial Hermann Hospital Southeast. Dr. Lawrence currently serves on the Medical Executive Committee, Performance Improvement Quality Review Committee (PIQR), Trauma Committee, Medical Informatics Committee and Tumor Board at Memorial Hermann Hospital Southeast. For the Memorial Hermann Physician Network (MHMD), he serves on the Radiology CPC Committee, System Medical Informatics Committee (MIC) and the e-Editorial Board.

He is also an avid athlete and six-time State Time Trial Champion in cycling. Congratulations, Dr. Lawrence, on this outstanding achievement. [A](#)