COMPLIANCE ALERT

TO: All Faculty, Residents, Allied Health Professionals and UFJPI/HI Billing Personnel

FROM: Maryann C. Palmeter, CPC, CCP
Physician Billing Compliance Manager

SUBJECT: Medical Record Addenda

DATE: April 4, 2003

In various policies and via various venues, the Office of Compliance has continually stated the importance of properly amending medical record documentation. In order to properly execute a medical record addendum, the provider must, at a minimum, write the following details in the medical record:

- the date the record is being amended;
- the details of the amended information;
- a statement that the entry is an addendum to the medical record (it is inappropriate to add an addendum to the medical record without identifying it as such);
- the date of service being amended; and
- the signature of the provider writing the addendum.

The medical record should be amended within a reasonable period of time that would allow the provider of service to recall the specific details of the patient encounter. Please keep in mind that medical record addendums should be an exception rather than a routine or recurring part of your medical record documentation. Outlined below are some examples of properly executed medical record addenda:

**Example 1**
2/10/03 Late Entry to Medical Record of 2/9/03

I saw and examined the patient on 2/9/03. I agree with the resident’s assessment except the heart murmur is louder. I will obtain an echo to evaluate.
Example 2

2/11/03 Addendum to Medical Record of 2/10/03

Total encounter time was 45 minutes. Total time spent counseling patient was 25 minutes.

Improper backdating of medical record documentation or otherwise providing improper medical record addenda could be viewed as fraud and subject the organization to significant risk.

With the deadline for the privacy provisions of HIPAA being just around the corner, patients may have a heightened awareness of their right to access and request amendments to their medical records. As such, the need to appropriately amend medical record documentation will become even more critical than it is at the present time. Please share this information with the appropriate personnel and feel free to contact me if you have any questions specific to this memorandum.

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