

The ACR/ASTRO Radiation Oncology Coding User's Guide has just been made available for use after several years of preparation by several professional societies. The Guide includes in depth descriptions of CPT codes that expands on the descriptors available from the AMA in the CPT manual published annually. Thus, several examples, stressing the technical component of reimbursement will be presented following suggested billing protocols in the Guide. These may include: charging for IMRT planning and delivery, charging for 5 field isocentric breast plan and treatment, charge structure for 3D-CRT prostate plan and treatment, some examples of low dose rate and high dose rate plans and application charging structure, etc.

Suggestions for appealing denials in charges for medical physicists using the Guide will be presented along with a brief discussion of reimbursement entities including Medicare, Medicaid, Commercial and Contract carriers and HMO's. Lastly, the concepts of "filters" and documentation for correct coding will be developed.

At the completion of the presentation, the attendee will:

1. Become familiar with the ACR/ASTRO Radiation Oncology Coding User's Guide
2. Be able to correctly assess appropriate use of codes to cover work effort in radiation oncology procedures
3. Construct a list of radiation oncology procedures with their common code assignments
4. Become knowledgeable about the mechanics of coding to enable fruitful discussions with the attendees' billing office personnel
5. Assess documentation requirements as part of correct coding for radiation oncology procedures