



TAKE YOUR PRACTICE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Measuring the Quality and Integrity of a Certification



Earning certification validates a person's professional achievement and demonstrates commitment to a particular profession. Practice Management Institute® (PMI) awards certification by exam to accomplished medical office coding, reimbursement, and practice management professionals. More than 12,000 medical office professionals have earned their credentials through PMI.

Recognition among Healthcare Entities

PMI's certification programs have earned the respect by leading employers like The Cleveland Clinic, and payers including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)¹. The nod by CMS and hundreds of other healthcare organizations across the country is reflective of PMI's integrity and recognition among major healthcare employers.

Other organizations like the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA), Professional Association of Healthcare Office Management (PAH-COM), and the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) provide certifications for medical office professionals. These organizations, like PMI, require candidates to demonstrate by exam competency in a particular subject matter.

In some areas of the country, employers require certain credentials over another to be employed, however, there is no state or federal government entity that regulates, endorses or approves a particular certification. PMI is named along with AHIMA by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as an example coding certification source for Medicare's Intermediary Provider Customer Service Program¹. National publications such as *Medical Economics*² and *Family Practice Management*³ have profiled PMI's credentials, reinforcing PMI's position as a leading credentialing organization for medical office professionals.

The Organization Behind the Credential

PMI is the training, networking and credentialing source for medical office professionals in the U.S. For more than 25 years, physicians and their staff have looked to PMI for skills that contribute to a more efficient, profitable and compliant office. Classes are hosted in 300 of the nation's leading hospitals, medical societies and colleges. Today, more than 50,000 medical office professionals attend PMI live training events each year to improve their skills and get the latest information for running a more efficient and compliant practice.



PMI classes, certifications and networks address a broad spectrum of practice management issues and staff training. PMI's certified professionals are confident, knowledgeable professionals able to demonstrate knowledge of current rules and contribute to a higher rate of paid claims. PMI certification is a currency that validates one's commitment to the profession, offers a sense of personal achievement, employer confidence, and can help guard the practice against fraud and abuse.

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The Certification Exam

PMI certification exams are offered only in a live-proctored environment in accordance with strict testing protocols. For example: Candidates taking the CMC exam must hand write codes according to the highest degree of specificity. Most organizations offer a multiple-choice coding exam but PMI has found the “fill-in-the-blank” format to be a more accurate measure of a coder’s skills. This eliminates the possibility to “guess” the correct answer by deselecting from choices provided on the exam. If the candidate cannot code from scratch, he/she won’t pass the exam. It is not an easy exam, however, PMI’s professional services team and advisory board stand behind the CMC exam as the best tool available to accurately measure coding competency.

The exams range from four to six hours in length. Live classroom and self-paced preparation methods are available through PMI. Experienced practice management professionals teach PMI certification preparatory courses in leading hospitals, medical societies and colleges throughout the country.

Continuing Education

Continuing education is a requirement of ongoing certification because, like most certified professionals, each must keep their skills current. PMI requires its certified professionals to obtain 12 CEUs per year of coding-related training to remain current. PMI offers a number of ways to earn CEUs toward certification renewal. These can be found in the certification area of PMI’s Web site: www.pmiMD.com.

PMI’s goal is to educate coders in communities across the country to help safeguard physicians. Its faculty team is comprised of first-rate professionals with a high degree of integrity, a love for teaching and a great deal of enthusiasm about their subject matter.



Making the Most of Certification

Earning certification with PMI is a valuable achievement for both the certified professional and his/her employer. More physicians need educated staff, capable of understanding the administrative side of their business. Those who continue to expand their professional knowledge will have the edge in today’s ever changing healthcare climate.

References

1 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Reference

Implementation of § 921 of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) – Provider Customer Service Program. Pub. 100-20 One-Time Notification, Transmittal 113, September 12, 2004, pg. 8. <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/transmittals/downloads/R113OTN.pdf>

2 Coding Credentials for your staff: Why and How

Medical Economics, Feb. 2004 <http://www.memag.com/memag/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=108776>

3 The Value of a Coding Education

Family Practice Management, March 2005 <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/20050300/20thev.html>

Log on to PMI’s Web site: www.pmiMD.com
and click on the *Certification* tab to learn more.
Or call PMI’s Professional Services Department at 800-259-5562
to review these options with a representative.

