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**Utilization Solutions**  
in Healthcare  
Solving the practice puzzle.

## **Putting your Practice Puzzle Together**

*A Monthly E-Zine for Utilization Solutions in Healthcare, Inc.*



## **State & Federal Watch**

On June 28, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), ruling that Congress acted within its constitutional authority when enacting the individual mandate. Given that the health care reform law was upheld, all aspects of the law that have already been implemented will remain in effect.

How will this affect PAs, NPs and others on the care delivery team?

Find out by [clicking here](#) to read our blog post that was posted on the Comphealth website.



## **Gimme The \$\$\$**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) today proposed to revise current Medicare regulations to clearly authorize nurse practitioners to order portable x-ray services, responding to concerns raised by ACNP and other NP organizations.

In the annual update of policies related to the [Medicare Physician Fee Schedule](#), CMS stated, "We propose to revise our current regulations, which limit ordering of portable x-ray services to only a MD or DO, to allow other physicians and nonphysician practitioners acting within the scope of their Medicare benefit and State law to order portable x-ray services." The agency continued, "This proposed change would allow a MD or DO, as well as a nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, physician assistant, certified nurse-midwife, doctor of optometry, doctor of dental surgery and doctor of dental medicine, doctor of podiatric medicine, clinical psychologist, and clinical social worker to order portable x-ray services within their State scope of practice and the scope of their Medicare benefit."

The proposed rule will be published in the July 30 Federal Register with a 60-day period for public comments that closes September 4. A final rule is likely to be released by November 1, with the new regulations going into effect January 1, 2013.



## **Solve the Clinical Puzzle**

*Whooping cough is quickly becoming a new epidemic according to the CDC.*

Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said that "Many states are seeing higher than expected cases of pertussis [whooping cough], and Pertussis has already caused the death of nine infants this year."

Pertussis rates are currently the highest since a historic low in the 1970s. Vaccination starts after the age of 1 and infants are especially vulnerable. Vaccination is especially important for pregnant women and for any others who come in contact with infants. Increases in reported cases are in part due to the waning immunity of the vaccine, perhaps earlier than the 10 years previously expected.

The full report is published in the July 20 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, a CDC publication.

References:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6128a1.htm>

<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=666879>

### **Your 2 cents**

Participate in this months industry poll by clicking simply [clicking here!](#)



### **Our Solution for You**

Keep track of legislative issues important to your interests with SCOUT -

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If you've subscribed to alerts about a specific bill, you will learn of alerts very shortly after the vote is taken -- usually within an hour, but often within 15 minutes.

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Also get pre-release copies of proposed and final regulations

All alerts on new regulations should arrive at least a day early, before that regulation is published in the Federal Register.

### **MEDIA - We're in the news again!**

USH made headlines in the Orlando Medical News!

Finding and keeping a great PA/NP is an art - we share tips and tricks for you to improve retention in your office or hospital

Check it out here <http://www.orlandomedicalnews.com/special-knack--cms-1446>

Kind regards,

*Lisa*



Lisa Shock is a Duke University Physician Assistant graduate and has greater

than 10 years of clinical experience in a variety of healthcare settings. In addition to previously owning and running a rural primary care clinic, she is the current president and CEO of Utilization Solutions in Healthcare, a company she created in response to the many questions she has received over the years about Physician Assistant utilization. Lisa is a past president of the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants. She also contributed to the Physician Assistant profession by serving on the PA Advisory Council of the North Carolina Medical Board as well as the Quality Improvement and Health Information Technology Committee of the North Carolina Medical Society, and she remains a state PA expert in reimbursement and legislative issues. She enjoys part time clinical primary care practice and enjoys teaching geriatric medicine and long term care as a Duke PA Program faculty member.

Lisa was recently interviewed on BlogTalkRadio - [listen here!](#)

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