

The Watchful Eye of the Government – Understanding The Office of Inspector General Work plan [^ Top](#)

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Each fiscal year, the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General publishes a work plan for the upcoming fiscal year. This document highlights the projects assigned to various agencies under the umbrella of the OIG and describes the details of that project. This document is of vital importance to healthcare providers as it can give you a head start on internal audit of your billing and coding compliance.

The document can be accessed at: <http://oig.hhs.gov/publications/workplan.html>

It is an Acrobat Reader file that can easily be downloaded through the internet. The document is divided into various provider types and agencies with sub-topics on the various projects that have been assigned to that department.

Projects under the Medicare Physicians and Other Health Professionals category include:

- Billing Service Companies
- Physician Pathology Services
- Cardiology and Echocardiography Services
- Physical and Occupational Therapy Services
- Payment to Providers of Care for Initial Preventive Physical Examination
- Part B Mental Health Services
- Wound Care Services
- Evaluation of “Incident to” Services
- Potential Duplicate Physical Therapy Claims
- Eye Surgeries
- Place of Service Errors
- Review of Evaluation and Management Services During Global Surgery Periods
- Psychiatry Services Provided in an Inpatient Setting
- Medicare Reimbursement for Polysomnography
- Long Distance Physician Claims Associated with Home Health and Skilled Nursing Facility Services
- Violations of Assignment Rules by Medicare Providers
- Advanced Imaging Services in Physician Offices

You may be thinking to yourself, “none of these subjects affect me or my practice,” think again! Here is the description of the Place of Service Errors – this particular project can affect many different provider types especially surgeons.

Place of Service Errors

This review will determine whether physicians properly coded the place of service on claims for services provided in ambulatory surgical centers and hospital outpatient departments. Medicare regulations provide for different levels of payments to physicians depending on where the service is performed. Medicare makes higher payments for physician office services. (*OAS; W-00-06-35113; various reviews; expected issue date: FY 2007; work in progress*)

The OIG at the Federal and State level has very sophisticated data mining systems that review claims submitted for processing with Medicare and Medicaid. Any provider is subject to review and audit by the Agency.

Visit and review the OIG work plan at least twice a year. The initial plan is published in late summer and an update is published in the spring. Keeping on top of these topics can keep you and your practice out of trouble by ensuring you meet the regulatory requirements of the Government.

Resources: OIG Work plan

SOURCE: Practice Management Institute

For further training, certification and other resources, see [listing of programs](#).

Publications related to this topic on website www.practicesupport.com include:

[2010 Physician Compliance Guide](#)

[Compliance, Coding & Medical Records – A Package of Tools & Tips](#)

[How to Survive an Audit – Audio Program](#)

