With its game show–style format and lively musical soundtrack, Code-a-Palooza is a highlight of the annual meeting. Volunteers, drawn from the ranks of attendees, form two teams that compete against each other and against the crowd, which is encouraged to text answers via mobile phone. All this makes the quiz a fun way to identify gaps in your coding knowledge. The event—which is organized by the American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives (AAOE)—takes place each year at the Academy’s annual meeting.

Five Tough Questions From Code-a-Palooza 2019

**Test your knowledge.** The five coding questions below got the most incorrect answers at last year’s contest.

**Q1—“I’ll Be Watching You.”** Which of the following tests do not require direct supervision?

- **A.** B-scan (76512)
- **B.** Visual evoked potential (95930)
- **C.** Sensorimotor exam (92060)
- **D.** Fluorescein angiography (92235)

**Q2—“Worth Your Weight in Gold.”** The surgeon removes a gold weight from a patient’s right eyelid. What is the appropriate CPT code?

- **A.** 67912–RT Correction of lagophthalmos, with implantation of upper eyelid lid load (gold weight)
- **B.** Not coded separately. It is included in the postoperative period of 67912 or, if outside that post-op period, it is included in the exam.
- **C.** 67938–RT Removal of foreign body, eyelid
- **D.** Not coded separately. It is included in the postoperative period of 67912 or, if outside that post-op period, it is included in the exam.

**Q3—“I Can’t Drive 55.”** An established patient needs to renew his driver license, and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requires a visual field. Is the practice entitled to payment for this service—and if so, who pays?

- **A.** The visual field is performed and billed to the payer using ICD-10 code Z04.8 Encounter for examination and observation for other specified reasons.
- **B.** Because it is required by the DMV, the practice must absorb the cost.
- **C.** If he is a Medicare patient, have him sign an Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN) prior to performing the visual field.
- **D.** The patient is responsible for payment.

**Q4—“Somebody Get Me a Doctor.”** If your practice is in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), when are you required to use modifier –AQ?

- **A.** Never. This modifier is no longer recognized.
- **B.** Never. Bonus payments are made automatically.
- **C.** Every time you submit a claim.
- **D.** Whenever the zip code area falls partially within a non–full county HPSA.

**Q5—“I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For.”** If you don’t have an ophthalmology-specific list of ICD-10 codes (see aao.org/codingproducts), you can waste a lot of time looking for the right diagnosis code. What ICD-10 code(s) ought to be used for bilateral upper and lower lid ulcerative blepharitis?

- **A.** H01.01C
- **B.** H01.01A + H01.01B
- **C.** H01.011 + H01.012
- **D.** Whenever the zip code area falls partially within a non–full county HPSA.

How did you do? See the answers on the next page.

**Schedule a 2020 Chart Audit Today**

A comprehensive chart audit is your first line of defense for avoiding claim denials and safeguarding reimbursements. The Ophthalmic Advisors Group offers consultation services from trusted Academy experts for chart audits, coding, business management, and more. Hourly or on-site daily appointments are available. Get started at aao.org/consulting.
Coming in the next issue’s mystery image.

Take a guess at the next Blink pearl.

A comprehensive Coding Checklist is the first step in proper management.

Savvy Coder

Coders inappropriate usage as fraudulent. Monies will be recouped, and practices may be turned over to the Benefit Integrity contractors.

Modifier –AQ is required in the following circumstances:
• When zip code areas do not fall entirely within a designated full county HPSA bonus area.
• When a zip code area falls partially within a full county HPSA but is not considered to be in that county based on the USPS dominance decision.
• When a zip code area falls partially within a non–full county HPSA.
• When a zip code area was not included in the automated file of HPSA areas based on the date of the data used to create the file.

Most common mistake: 38% of the audience gave the wrong answer: A—Never. Bonus payments are made automatically.

5: B—H01.01A Ulcerative blepharitis right eye, upper and lower eyelids + H01.01B Ulcerative blepharitis left eye, upper and lower eyelids. When added as a sixth character to H01.01 (the ICD-10 code for ulcerative blepharitis), A, B, and C represent the following:
A: right eye, upper and lower eyelids
B: left eye, upper and lower eyelids
C: bilateral, upper and lower eyelids

Note: All three characters (A, B, and C) can be applied in the same way to codes H02.20 (unspecified lagophthalmos), H02.21 (cicatricial lagophthalmos), H02.22 (mechanical), and H02.22 (paralytic lagophthalmos).

However, only A and B apply to H01.00 (unspecified blepharitis), H01.01 (ulcerative blepharitis), and H01.02 (squamous blepharitis)—ICD-10 keeps us on our toes!

Most common mistake: 50% of the audience gave the incorrect answer: C—H01.011 + H01.012.

Don’t miss Code-a-Palooza! Be sure to attend the AAOE program (Nov. 13-17) in Las Vegas at AAO 2020 (Nov. 14-17) and see how you do at Code-a-Palooza 2020. This year, registration and hotel reservations for AAO 2020 (aao.org/2020) will open for Academy and AAOE members on April 8. To attend Code-a-Palooza, you will need to buy an Academy Plus course pass.