What’s next

Healthcare

Celebrating CDI superheroes who help make high-quality patient care possible

As the Association of Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialists (ACDIS) celebrates CDI Week in September, we at Nuance also recognize and honor all the CDI specialists who are truly “the heroes hospitals deserve.”

Melinda "Mel" Tully
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Superheroes, it’s been said, symbolize hope as well as “the power to overcome any adversary.” They do good deeds, sweep in to save people who can’t save themselves, and act courageously in the face of adversity. Superheroes don’t exist only in fiction, however, and as the catchphrase goes, “not all heroes wear capes,” and the truth is that hospitals and healthcare organizations are filled with heroes who don’t wear capes.

Certainly, physicians and nurses are on the front lines of healthcare, providing the life-saving care and treatment patients need. But they aren’t the only heroes. The efforts and good deeds clinical documentation improvement (CDI) specialists accomplish every day help ensure that providers have access to the most accurate documentation possible to make the best possible decisions about each patient’s care. Just as importantly, CDI specialists are helping healthcare organizations receive appropriate reimbursements for the care provided.

For example, when Baptist Health in South Florida established its advanced practice CDI program, the organization realized a 9-point increase in the capture rate of severity of illness, as well as a nearly 7-point increase in risk of mortality capture. These changes in quality metrics better reflect the health of the patient population, which means providers can better care for patients; but it has also meant that the organization is realizing appropriate reimbursements as a result. None of this would have been possible without the superhero CDI team, whose role has been to help accurately document the complexity and severity of every patient’s illness.

As the Association of Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialists (ACDIS) celebrates CDI Week in September, we at Nuance also recognize and honor all the CDI specialists who are truly “the heroes hospitals deserve.” In this spirit, we launched a podcast series: Nuance in Healthcare. In season one, we focus on the passion that surrounds CDI. Speakers share stories of how their CDI expertise and role within clinical documentation are improving patient care. Check it out.

Thank you for all you do, and enjoy your week of recognition – it is well deserved!

Tags: CDI, clinical documentation improvement

About Melinda "Mel" Tully

Melinda (Mel) Tully is the vice president of clinical services and education for Nuance Healthcare, overseeing the development and expansion of clinical documentation programs and clinical education best practices. Mel joined Nuance in 1998 and has more than 25 years of experience in multiple healthcare arenas as a provider, clinical manager in a large academic facility, and as an expert in clinical documentation improvement (CDI). Mel attended Emory University, where she earned her Master’s degree in Nursing. She has been certified through the Association of Clinical Documentation Specialists (ACDIS) as a clinical documentation specialist, as well as by the American Health Information and Management Association (AHIMA) as a documentation improvement practitioner.

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