

Three Easy Steps to a Successful Outpatient CDI Program

A WEBINAR PRESENTED ON DECEMBER 20, 2023

Presented By



Colleen Gianatasio, MHS, CPC, CPCO, CRC, CDEO, CPC-P, CPMA, CPPM, CCS, CCDS-O, has over 20 years of experience in the health insurance field. She has experience in customer service, claims, quality, and coding. As director of clinical documentation integrity and coding compliance, Gianatasio's primary responsibilities are provider engagement and clinical documentation integrity for accurate coding and reimbursement. She specializes in developing innovative coding curricula and instructions to comply with federal guidelines and the appropriate reimbursement processes. She is a certified AAPC instructor and enjoys teaching a variety of coding, documentation, and auditing classes. Gianatasio serves as president of the AAPC National Advisory Board and has built and overseen several successful outpatient CDI programs at the local and national level, as well as on the payer and provider side. She has been speaking for AAPC and RISE since 2015 and has also spoken for ACDIS Outpatient Symposium, Strategic Solutions, and BRI network.

Learning Outcomes

- At the completion of this educational activity, the learner will be able to:
 - Identify the need for outpatient CDI at their organization
 - Identify the components of building an outpatient CDI program
 - Evaluate hiring needs
 - Develop provider engagement best practices
 - Detect provider engagement pitfalls before they jeopardize the success of a program

What are the 3 easy steps to establishing your program?

1. Decide your “why”
2. Choose your team wisely
3. Excel at provider engagement

Step 1: Decide Your “Why”

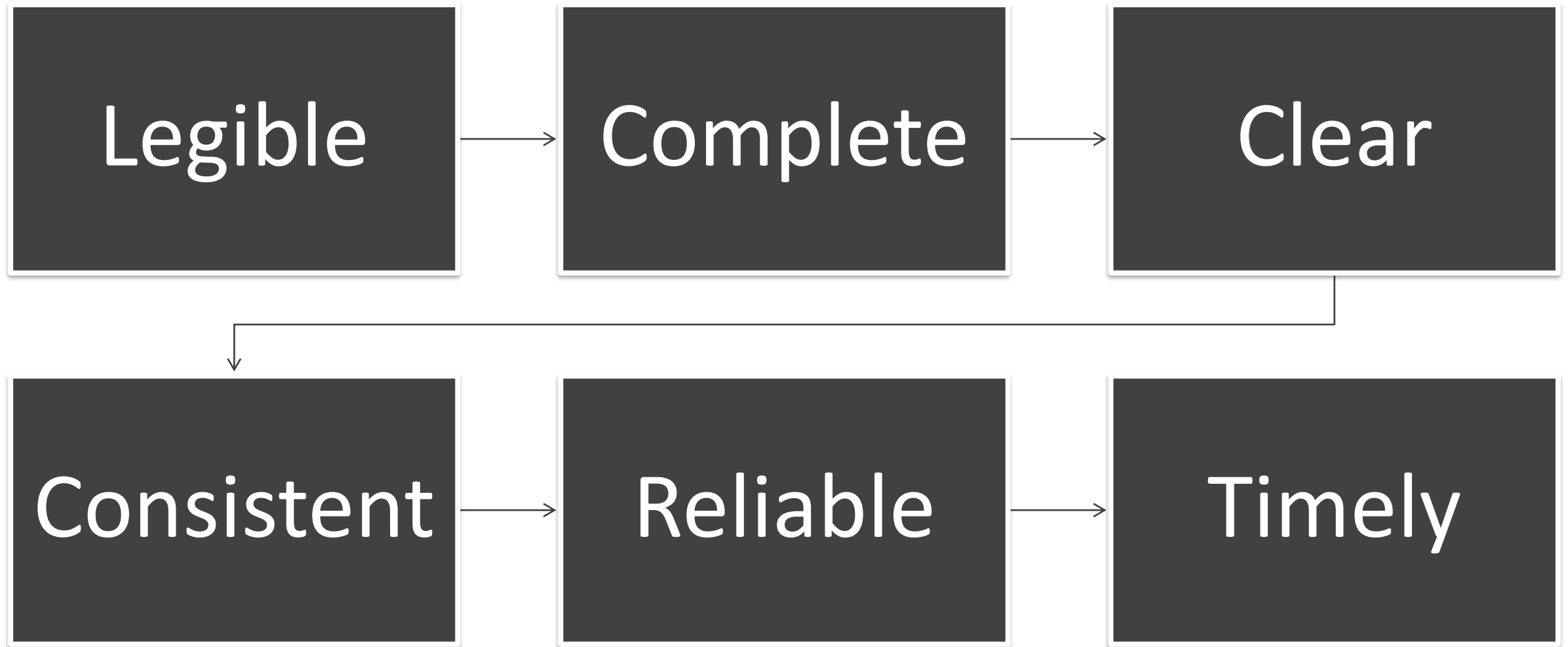
What Made Us Consider An Outpatient CDI Program?

- Reduced audit risk
- More actionable data
- Fewer administrative burdens
- Improved physician engagement
- Better patient experiences/outcomes

What Are The Challenges?

- Volume of outpatient visits
- Doctors don't have time
- Shifting reimbursement methodologies
- Changing guidelines and regulations
- New or established program
- Organization size and direction
- Experience of team

What Are The CMS Requirements?



Step 2: Choose Your Team Wisely

What Did We Look For When Selecting Our Team?

- Knowledge of coding concepts and guidelines
- Clinical knowledge
- Payment methodology knowledge
- Excellent communication skills
- Soft skills

How Did We Train Our Team?

- Come prepared
- Know your audience
- Research as needed
- Establish an agreed upon escalation policy
- Continually educate – use multiple approaches

Step 3: Excel At Provider Engagement

What Were The Barriers?

- People
- Process
- Technology

When To Query

- Conflicting
- Incomplete
- Ambiguous
- Inconsistent

When Not To Query

- Queries are not necessary for every discrepancy or unaddressed documentation issue in accordance with an organization's policy and procedure.
- Do not query if the provider cannot offer clarification based on the present health record documentation.
- Do not query when there is sufficient documentation to assign a valid code but no indicators that the code can be specified to a higher degree. Queries should only be generated when the clinical data (present and relative historical data) fully supports the answer choice(s).

- <https://acdis.org/resources/guidelines-achieving-compliant-query-practice%E2%80%942022-update>

How To Query

- Open-ended
- Multiple choice
- Yes/No
- Verbal

How To Set Up A Query

- Patient identifiers
- Date of query
- Query
- Relevant clinical indicators
- CDI specialist name and contact information

What Oversight Is Needed?

- Was the query necessary?
- Was the query compliant? If not, why?
- Were there missed opportunities for queries?

How To Set Provider Expectations

- What to expect
- Query process overview
- Continuous feedback loops

How Do You Establish Better Provider Engagement?

- Respect
- Preparation
- Flexible and innovative approaches

Additional Keys To Provider Engagement



VENDOR DUE-DILIGENCE



AWARENESS OF PHYSICIAN PRESSURE



SENSITIVITY TO ALERT FATIGUE



PHYSICIAN CHAMPION

How Do We Measure Success?

Query Date	CDI Specialist	Provider	Focus Area	Provider Response/ Date	Provider Agreement Y/N	Financial Impact	Notes

Total Number of Encounters	Total Number of Patients	Total Number of Queries	Total Number of Agreed	Financial Impact

Questions & Answers



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To Submit a Question: Go to the chat pod located in the lower left corner of your screen. Type your question in the text box, then click on the “Send” button.

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This concludes today's program.

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