2025 Virtual Winter Conference Program*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025 Virtual Sessions Only (up to 6.0 CEUs)	
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Get connected to Zoom. Grab your cup of coffee and get ready to learn!
9:00 AM – 9:55 AM	*CPT Updates for 2025* **Dianna Foley, RHIA, CCS, CHPS, CDIP** Coding Consultant
10:00 AM – 10:55 AM	*Auditing the AI Autonomous Coder* **Amber Berryman, MBA, RHIA, CDIP** Senior Director, Strategic Solutions Advisor at Optum **LaSha Coffer, MSHSM, RHIA** Senior Product Manager at Optum
11:00 AM - 11:55 AM	*What Are Clinical Validation Denials? How To Recognize & Improve: How Does QIO Affect Your Claim?* **Dorothy Steed, MSLD, CCS, CDIP, COC, CPCO, CPUM, CPUR, CPHM, CPMA, ACS-OP, CCS-P, RCC, RMC, CEMC, CPC-I, CFPC, PCS, FCS, CRCR, CICA, CPAR** Consultant/Auditor/Educator Independent & Adjunct Instructor: Lanier Technical College
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch Break
1:00 PM – 1:55 PM	*How to Work In a Toxic Environment (And Not Lose It)* **Preethi Fernando** Author, Speaker, Founder of Kelum Training and Consulting
2:00 PM – 2:55 PM	*Strategies for Health Information Leadership: Overcoming Staffing Challenges* **Darin Challacombe, Ph.D., SHRM-CP** Director, Talent Development at Verisma Systems **Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS** Director, Compliance and Government Affairs at Verisma Systems
3:00 PM – 3:55 PM	TBD
3:55 PM – 4:00 PM	$50 Gift Card Give Away

*Agenda may be subject to change without notice.

Last revised 12/20/2024

2025 Virtual Winter Conference Program Description

Friday, February 7, 2025

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

CONNECT TO ZOOM
Grab your cup of coffee and get ready to learn!

9:00 AM – 9:55 AM SESSION

CPT Updates for 2025

Dianna Foley, RHIA, CCS, CHPS, CDIP
Coding Consultant

Review the 2025 CPT code updates with this informative webinar. We will explore many of the over 400 changes occurring in CPT for 2025. These will include general surgery codes that address skin graft wound care and abdominal tumor elimination. As usual, there are a number of new Category III CPT codes that will be added, and details will be provided so that coding professionals have a greater understanding of these codes.

Attendees will come away from the presentation with:
1. Knowledge of the new general surgery codes
2. Clarity regarding the new Category III codes introduced for 2025
3. Information on the new digital medicine and AI codes that are being implemented

Domain I: Data Structure, Content, and Information Governance – 1 CEU

10:00 AM – 10:55 AM SESSION

Auditing the AI Autonomous Coder

Amber Berryman, MBA, RHIA, CDIP
Senior Director, Strategic Solutions Advisor at Optum

LaSha Coffer, MSHSM, RHIA
Senior Product Manager at Optum

Artificial Intelligence is being utilized by healthcare organizations in many forms, such as: Natural Language Processing, Deep Language Learning, Machine Learning, and Generative Artificial Intelligence. Specifically, in the middle revenue cycle space, the role of the coder is changing to require top-of-license expertise. While autonomous coding is the future, the concern for quality becomes paramount as a new responsibility of the traditional coder. The course will help coding managers, coders, auditors, and educators understand these new responsibilities and develop best auditing practices of autonomous coding. This course will also highlight auditing data and analysis for future education plans.

Learning Objectives:
- Auditing AI of Autonomous Coding.
- Future impact to traditional coder role.
- Understanding the Basics of Auditing.
- How data and analysis can help develop education plans.

Domain VIII: Evolving Topics/Other HIIM Relevant Topics – 1 CEU

11:00 AM – 11:55 AM SESSION

What Are Clinical Validation Denials? How To Recognize & Improve: How Does QIO Affect Your Claim?

Dorothy Steed, MSLD, CCS, CDIP, COC, CPCO, CPUM, CPUR, CPHM, CPMA, ACS-OP, CCS-P, RCC, RMC, CEMC, CPC-I, CFPC, PCS, FCS, CRCR, CICA, CPAR
Consultant/Auditor/Educator
Independent & Adjunct Instructor: Lanier Technical College

Many providers have experienced an increase in clinical validation denials. This is a specific denial category that occurs when clinical evidence in the patient chart is inadequate to support a billed diagnosis. It is not the same as coding, billing or charging errors. It is important to understand the cause of these denials and develop strategies to improve the process. For example, if the provider documents Acute Respiratory Failure, the chart should include ABG values, whether the patient has chronic respiratory compromise and evidence of aggressive measures of oxygen intake. Documentation that is lacking in these areas may lead to denial of the claim. Regardless of your setting, it is important to quickly identify these denials and work with your providers to adequately support conditions documented in the record.

Domain IV. Revenue Cycle Management – 1 CEU

Noon – 1:00 PM

Lunch Break

1:00 PM – 1:55 PM SESSION

How to Work In a Toxic Environment (And Not Lose It)

Preethi Fernando
Author, Speaker, Founder of Kelum Training and Consulting

All it takes is one toxic employee to run wild and before you know it, the workplace gets od'd by division, manipulation, low morale, burnout, and time waste. Toxic employees are infectious. Beware. Like Carbon monoxide poisoning, toxicity does its damage, silently. Catch it early. Bring out the toxicity into the open without delay. Warn the person the damage the behavior is causing. If everything in the book has been tried to understand, negotiate, and work with a toxic person, and nothing has changed for a long time it may be time to quit from toxicity and walk away. Find a new environment where your self-worth is valued. Trying to fix a toxic person is an emotionally exhausting experience. Mindfulness, quiet reflection, retreats to rejuvenate, and getting attuned with one's self are powerful mental health techniques to heal from toxins. Confront the toxicity by copying a third person on those e-mails, having a third person physically present during sensitive conversations, and opting out of their group chats. Setting boundaries, saying no, limiting time around them, and sometimes completely getting untangled from their mental holds can be very effective for self-care.

Domain VI. Organizational Management and Leadership – 1 CEU

2:00 PM – 2:55 PM SESSION

Strategies for Health Information Leadership: Overcoming Staffing Challenges

Darin Challacombe, Ph.D., SHRM-CP
Director, Talent Development at Verisma Systems

Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS
Director, Compliance and Government Affairs at Verisma Systems

Healthcare is undergoing a profound transformation, with most U.S. health systems struggling with high turnover, evolving work models, and low employee engagement. While these models offer flexibility for staff, they also face skepticism about productivity, collaboration and trustworthiness. This session will delve into the challenges faced by health information leaders including understaffing, skill gaps, and fluctuating workloads. Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of these issues and discover innovative solutions to help leaders overcome these universal challenges. Don't miss this opportunity to stay ahead and lead your organization toward a successful and productive future.

Domain VI: Organizational Management and Leadership – 1 CEU

3:00 PM – 3:55 PM SESSION

TBD

2025 Virtual Winter Conference Speakers

Amber Berryman, MBA, RHIA, CDIP
Senior Director, Strategic Solutions Advisor at Optum

Amber Berryman has over 18 years of experience in Revenue Cycle Management including: Patient Registration, Health Information Management (HIM), Coding, Clinical Documentation Integrity, Patient Financial Services, and Chargemaster. In her current role, Amber leads a team of solution matter experts for the implementation of Enterprise Computer Assisted Coding, Clinical Documentation Improvement 3D, and Audit and Compliance Manager in the acute care market. Throughout Amber's 12 years at Optum, she has led the implementation of all Market Performance Partnerships, created and managed the Coding and CDI Operational Assessments for commercial implementations, as well as support Sales with Delivery Assurance. She has also implemented additional products within Optum for Enterprise Chargemaster Expert and Facility Encoder apart of Revenue Cycle Pro platform, where she developed procedures and streamlined processes for implementation. In addition to working for Optum, Amber also teaches coding and revenue cycle management courses, as an adjunct professor. She is also an active member of her CSA for Georgia Health Information Management Association (GHIMA) as the Mentoring Chair and has served as the President of GHIMA in 2013. Prior to coming to Optum, she was the HIM Director of a long term acute care facility. In her role, she oversaw daily activities of coding, release of information, HIM operations, as well as served on many committees. Amber received her Masters of Business Administration in Health Administration from Brenau University and has two certifications from American Health Information Management Association for Registered Health Information Administrator and Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner.

Darin Challacombe, Ph.D., SHRM-CP
Director, Talent Development at Verisma Systems

Darin Challacombe, SHRM-CP, Ph.D., is the Director of Talent Development at Verisma Systems. He has worked in the education space for 18 years, and in the medical records industry for five years. He is an integral member of the HR team and oversees onboarding and training for all Verisma employees. Currently, he also serves on the executive leadership team for AHIOS as Secretary.

LaSha Coffer, MSHSM, RHIA
Senior Product Manager at Optum

LaSha Cofer has over 24 years of professional experience as an award-winning Health Information Management (HIM) professional in family practice, inpatient rehab, long and short-term acute care and higher education. She has worn all hats in the HIM space and served in various managerial roles, coding, consulting and teaching. Asha joined Optum in February of 2013 as a Product Specialist on the implementation team for the Optum Enterprise Computer-Assisted Coding solution. She is now a Senior Product Manager. Asha is an Adjunct Instructor for Ross College and serves as the president for the Board of Directors of the Georgia Health Information Management Association. Prior to joining Optum, LaSha was a Level III inpatient coder with Hospital Corporation of America under their Parallon Business Solutions division and provided coding services for multiple acute care facilities in a shared service environment. LaSha also spent several years managing Health Information Management departments in specialty acute care settings. Asha is a graduate of American Sentinel University, the Medical College of Georgia and Gordon College and holds a M.S. in Health Systems Management, B.S. in Health Information Management and A.S. in Health Information Management, respectively. She is a Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) and an AHIMA-Approved Revenue Cycle Trainer.

Dianna Foley, RHIA, CCS, CDIP, CHPS
Self-employed Coding Consultant

Dianna is an HIM professional with over 25 years of experience. She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati and holds RHIA, CHPS, CDIP, and CCS certifications from AHIMA, along with being an AHIMA-approved ICD-10-CM/PCS trainer. Dianna has held many positions in HIM and is now an independent coding consultant. She previously served as the program director for Medical Coding and HIT at Eastern Gateway Community College. Dianna is an AHIMA-published author and has volunteered with AHIMA on projects including certification item writing, certification exam development, coding rapid design, and most recently has served on AHIMA's nominating committee. She is a presenter on coding topics at the national, state, and regional levels and serves as OHIMA's Education Coordinator. Dianna mentors new AHIMA members and also provides monthly educational lectures to coders and clinical documentation specialists.

Preethi Fernando
Author, Speaker, Founder of Kelum Training and Consulting

Preethi Fernando is an author of 15 books, speaker, and consultant. In her latest book "I Never Told You It was Easy…I Said "You Got This," Preethi unfolds the essence of being genuine. She does trainings and workshops for corporations, and associations. Visit preethifernando.com. kelumteam.com

Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS
Director, Compliance and Government Affairs at Verisma Systems

Elizabeth McElhiney, MHA, CHPS, CPHIMS is the Director of Compliance and Government Affairs at Verisma Systems. She has worked in the Release of Information industry for over 14 years; covering all areas of the industry from customer service to compliance. Currently, she is the Government Affairs Chairperson at the Association of Health Information Outsourcing Solutions (AHIOS). Ms. McElhiney is also a first-year delegate for the Illinois Health Information Management Association.

Dorothy Steed, MSLD, CCS, CDIP, COC, CPCO, CPUM, CPUR, CPHM, CPMA, ACS-OP, CCS-P, RCC, RMC, CEMC, CPC-I, CFPC, PCS, FCS, CRCR, CICA, CPAR
Consultant/Auditor/Educator
Independent & Adjunct Instructor: Lanier Technical College

Dorothy Steed is an Independent Healthcare Consultant and Educator. She has served as a Medicare specialist and a physician audit supervisor for hospital systems with 49 years of experience in healthcare. She is an instructor at a state technical college and provides auditing & training in both facility and physician services. She is credentialed in medical coding, medical billing, medical auditing, utilization management, healthcare management, healthcare compliance, clinical documentation improvement, revenue cycle and patient accounts. Additionally, she has participated in multiple healthcare audits and investigations for both plaintiff and defendant. She has provided review services for 2 state QIO organizations & served as an expert witness in several legal disputes. She holds a Master's degree in Strategic Leadership Development.