

May 6, 2004

John Rowe, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer
Aetna Inc.
151 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06156

Dear Dr. Rowe:

On behalf of the American Medical Group Association (AMGA) membership, I am writing to urge Aetna Insurance, Inc., to adopt the Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) guidelines for its billing edits. AMGA joins the virtually unanimous opinion of the health care community in its belief that adoption of a national coding edit standard, such as the CCI, will promote efficiency and cost savings for providers and payers alike.

Representing the nation's largest, most prestigious integrated healthcare delivery systems caring for more than 50 million patients in 40 states, AMGA-member group practices have, on average, 272 physicians and 13 satellite locations in both urban and rural locations.

AMGA appreciated Dr. Don Storey's participation in a discussion of this issue at a recent AMGA regional conference in Washington State. As an Aetna representative, Dr. Storey heard a mere sampling of AMGA members' concerns regarding Aetna's computerized claims edit tool and the difficulties it presents. While Dr. Storey attended an AMGA regional meeting and heard regional members' complaints, sadly this is not a just regional problem, but one more pervasive.

The claims edit program currently used by Aetna may impair claims handling efficiency and accuracy, as it results in costly, time-consuming, and resource-depleting appeals and resubmissions by providers on a routine basis.

As a provider representative organization encompassing the medical profession and institutions serving America, the AMGA strongly recommends that Aetna adopt the Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) guidelines for edits. I speak for our members, and probably for other providers as well, in directing your attention to the efficiency, cost savings, and resource-preserving benefits of use of a national standardized edit program.

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AMGA and its members would appreciate your consideration of this matter, and I would be available to discuss this with you in more detail at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Donald W. Fisher, Ph.D., CAE
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: William Popik, M.D.
Ms. Charlyn Iovino