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Compliance Audit Manual Helps Keep Auditors on Same Page; Pre-Audit Surveys Are Useful

By Nina Youngstrom

To give compliance auditors tools to go about their business uniformly, WellSpan Health in York, Pennsylvania, developed a comprehensive manual of its audit process, which was converted to an electronic version when employees headed home to work because of COVID-19. The audit manual doesn't leave a lot to chance, with step-by-step guidance on researching risk areas, determining sample size, surveying departments before and after audits and presenting results to executives, among other things.

"We found that a lot of coders who came to compliance knew coding, but they didn't know auditing," said Compliance Audit Coordinator Frank Mesaros, who did the electronic conversion. "This helped them through the process so we are all on the same page."

There are a lot of elements in the audit manual, which is structured around an audit checklist.^[1] Auditors are instructed to research the areas they will audit, and an example of an HHS Office of Inspector General provider compliance audit is included, as well as documentation checklists from Targeted Probe and Educate that were created by Medicare administrative contractors. With sample reports and spreadsheets, auditors don't always have to create something from scratch, said Wendy Trout, WellSpan's director of corporate compliance.

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