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About Maxim Health Information Services

Maxim Health Information Services (MHIS) provides superior quality [coding, auditing, clinical documentation improvement, and health information technology services](#) to healthcare organizations across the country. MHIS offers on-site coding support, remote coding services, auditing and review services, education and training, HIM outsourcing solutions, and services to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Centers. MHIS provides qualified healthcare professionals

Welcome to the January issue of Maxim Coding CornerSM! As a leader in the HIM industry, [Maxim Health Information Services](#) is committed to providing you with coding-related topics that matter to you. This month, we are focusing on a new coding symbol denoting resequenced codes that went into effect January 1, 2010. Read on below to learn more and be sure to look for information at the end of this article about our new [Ask a Coding Question](#) feature!

A New Coding Symbol Denoting Resequenced Codes Effective January 1, 2010

With the many changes for 2010, you will notice a new symbol in the 2010 CPT Coding Book. The pound sign, or number sign, "#" is significant in that it indicates that a CPT code is out of sequence. In other words, the code is not placed in numerical order for a particular subheading within a family of related concepts, which is something new to all users of this resource.

Traditionally, AMA has remained consistent with its traditional numbering of codes. Each year, deletions and additions are outlined to keep pace with advancing procedures and technologies. However, due to increasing needs placed on this code set, keeping to its traditional code assignments has rapidly become outdated.

To address the growing needs, AMA has decided to break with past protocol and institute the "Resequencing Initiative." According to AMA, "Resequencing of CPT codes allows placement of related codes to an appropriate location, regardless of the availability of code numbers for numerical placement. This initiative also allows the CPT code set to expand and grow as a HIPAA designated code set, and demonstrates the capacity to respond to today's health information technology (HIT) requirements.

Accordingly, the content of the code descriptor will be the factor in determining the actual placement of the code in the CPT book. To illustrate this, refer to CPT code **21552** (Excision, tumor, soft tissue of the neck or anterior thorax, subcutaneous; 3cm or greater). In the book, this new CPT code follows the existing CPT

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code 21555 (Excision, tumor, soft tissue of the neck or anterior thorax, subcutaneous; less than 3cm). The new CPT code **21552** is preceded with both the pound sign # and a red circle, denoting the code as both "resequenced" and new, respectively.

For many CPT coders, this change may take some adjustment. Fortunately, there are only 27 "resequenced" codes introduced for 2010. Coders should refer to Appendix N of the CPT book for a complete listing of these codes for reference.

Reference: www.ama-assn.org

Ask a Coding Question

Have a coding-related question that you would like to get answered by an MHIS coding expert? Visit our new ["Ask a Coding Question"](#) page to submit your question for review. If your question is selected as the **Coding Question of the Month**, a full answer will be posted on our website for you and all MHIS website visitors to reference!

To learn more about Maxim Health Information Services, visit us [online](#) or call **866-265-0589**.

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