10 things to know: driving surgeon satisfaction with Computer-Assisted Physician Documentation (CAPD)

Bringing order to a disorderly process.

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It's unfortunate but true that today's surgeons are more prone to burnout and its effects than other physicians. It takes its toll on us both at home and work, and many healthcare organizations have made it a priority to alleviate the administrative burdens that contribute to burnout.

Although there are many approaches based on each organization and each surgeon, computer-assisted physician documentation (CAPD) solutions purposefully designed and built for the ways surgeons work is one such way. These technologies drive surgeon satisfaction in key ways. Here are your ten things to know:

1 CAPD brings order to an otherwise disorderly process. Historically, surgeons do not have the tools to create their documentation in a standardized way. When you start with free text, there's a tendency to leave out elements that may not seem important but may affect appropriate reimbursements. The built-in rules engine inherent in surgical CAPD solutions guides the surgeon through the process to help create effective, comprehensive, and accurate documentation.

2 There's no need for any ICD learning or training. The sheer volume of codes means no surgeon can know them all; but more importantly, they should focus on patient care, not the coding process. With surgical CAPD at the point of care, surgeons simply build the documentation that best reflects the patient and care provided.

3 Surgical CAPD solutions store personal context for each procedure and allow multiple versions of a single procedure. No two surgeons will complete a procedure in exactly the same way, making these features particularly significant in terms of satisfaction.

4 Creating required ACS recertification case lists becomes instant. Instead of manually siphoning through years of work, the surgical CAPD stores this information to create case lists automatically. It's a tremendous time-saver.

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5 **Vast amounts of data are available for improved analytics and research.** Of all the procedures completed in the U.S. every day, a tiny fraction is available for analytic evaluation and research. Surgical CAPD solutions, however, become an excellent tool for research, and data can be generated in a matter of seconds. For example, if I want to know how many colon resections I've completed on patients with a BMI greater than 40, I can do that instantly now.

6 **CPT options are easily visible to ensure the appropriate level of service is selected by the surgeon.** Consider that there are 11 types of thyroidectomy procedures, but most are documented as either partial or total. Having the full range of CPT options easily visible, allows the surgeon to select the appropriate level of service, rather than having it assigned later during coding processes.

7 **Event-centric documentation enables greater specificity.** Electronic medical records (EMRs) are patient-centric and make it easy to find one patient's entire history. But if you want to know what happened to your patient on the day their wisdom teeth were extracted, that type of information isn't immediately available to you. The surgical CAPD solution instead enables you to create the event-centric documentation.

8 **Mobile applications help surgeons make better use of their time.** No matter where I am or what I'm doing, the surgical CAPD's mobile application means I can see an op note or imaging and respond to a patient or provider requests in real-time.

9 **Creating documentation within surgical CAPD is faster and more accurate than existing, free-flowing processes.** And while you can't pre-dictate a procedure note, you can pre-position a note within surgical CAPD.

10 **Communication with referring physicians is seamless.** Once you've completed your note, the surgical CAPD solution prompts you to send a copy of the note to the patient's provider, opening up these lines of communication.

One last thing—a bonus!—for you to know about surgical CAPD: As surgeons, we are very good about talking with our patients and their families and conveying post-op instructions. Too often, however, patients forget parts of what we said, or discharge paperwork shares outdated instructions that contradict our preferences. With surgical CAPD, your preferred post-op instructions can be included in the final report. At the end of the day, all of these features not only enhance surgeon satisfaction, they also improve the lines of communication between doctors, coders, and patients.

About the Author
Dr. Newman is a practicing general surgeon in Gadsden, Alabama, with more than 25 years' experience. He has been on the Physician Advisory Board of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama for 15 years and currently serves as Chair. Since 1990, Dr. Newman has traveled domestically and abroad speaking and publishing extensively on minimally invasive surgery. Over the last 12 years, Dr. Newman has focused on improving the quality and detail of physician documentation. At Nuance, he specializes in CAPD solutions and protecting physician practices by helping them document more completely at the point of care.

To learn how Nuance Surgical CAPD can ease the clinical documentation burden for your care teams, please call 1-877-805-5902 or visit nuance.com/go/surgicalcapd.

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