Tips for Taking an AAPC Certification Exam

Preparing For Your Exam

- Electronic devices with an on/off switch (cell phones, smart phones, tablets, etc.) are not allowed into the examination room. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disqualification of your exam.
- Verify the start time and examination address at least two days before your test date. If you are unfamiliar with the exam site, you should consider getting driving directions from maps.google.com or www.mapquest.com. Factor any construction, traffic, or possible inclement weather during your commute into your drive time and try to arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Confirm what exam materials are allowed to be used during the examination and gather these items a couple of days before the examination (Photo ID, Member ID, plenty of #2 pencils, and an eraser along with the appropriate coding manuals.) Please view our Exam Instructions to see what manuals are acceptable.
- Most examinees have found that you perform better when you get a good night's sleep before the examination. We do not believe that staying up all night studying for the exam is very useful.
- Eat a healthy breakfast (nothing too heavy) and bring light snacks and water to keep you energized during the exam. Peppermint or lemon candy generally keeps you alert.
- If you are sensitive to noise, bring earplugs to eliminate distractions during the exam.
- Layer your clothing in case the room temperature fluctuates.
- Successful examinees have well-thumbed code books. Become familiar with all parts of your CPT, ICD-9-CM and HCPCS code books, and know how to quickly locate the codes, guidelines, tables, and instructions within them. This may be the most important tip we can give you.

What To Do During The Test

- Listen carefully while the proctor reads the instructions. Ask questions before the examination begins if you do not understand the instructions given.
- Be especially careful about marking your answer sheet. Make sure to correctly fill in your selected bubble on the test grid. Exams are machine graded and to ensure an accurate score, bubbles must be filled out as shown on the example on your test grid.
- Scan the entire test when you are instructed to begin. Answer the easiest, shortest questions first – this gives you the experience of succeeding and stimulates associations.
- Remember to pace yourself. You have an average of 2 minutes and 15 seconds to answer each question. Stay relaxed and do not panic. You will be able to finish.
• Read each question carefully. Note such words in the question as "not, except, most, least and greatest." These words are often crucial in determining the correct answer. However there are no "trick" questions on the exam, so don't worry about hidden words or meanings.

• Answer every question. If you do not know the right answer, eliminate as many wrong answers as possible, then select among the remaining answers. If you don't have a clue – guess. A guess is better than a blank response.

• If you finish with some additional time, use that time to go back and review any questions that you were not fully sure you had the correct answer. Use the code books again to confirm.