

## How do you code a Discharge Day Management Code?

On the day of discharge, the attending physician meets face-to-face with the patient for a final examination, discusses their hospital stay, and prepares the discharge records by dictating the discharge summary, completing referral forms and writing out prescriptions. This service took the physician 45 minutes to complete. There is no documentation of time in the progress note by the physician.

What code would you select?

- 99238 Hospital Discharge Day Management 30 minutes or less
- 99239 Hospital Discharge Day Management 30 minutes or more

**Answer:** The correct code would be 99238 Hospital Discharge Day Management 30 minutes or less.

### **Why?**

Hospital Discharge Day Management codes are **timed based** so it is required that the **documentation** reflect the total time spent by a physician preparing the discharge of a patient. In this case since the physician did not document any time, the service would be down coded to 99238. As with all other time-based services, only the billing provider's time counts. Discharge-related services performed by residents, students, or ancillary staff (i.e., RNs) *do not* count toward the physician's discharge service time.