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A deer in the headlights

I liked Dr Cavers' March 2015 President's Comment [BCMJ 2015; 57:57] calling for doctors to get involved in teaching medical students. I have been teaching for the past 9 years. I've always felt that it is my responsibility to teach skills that are not offered by any other physician in Canada to first- and second-year medical students. I teach them peripheral nerve root blocks (cervical, thoracic, and lumbar) and intra-articular injections to most joints in the body.

I always look forward to seeing their hands stop shaking after a few procedures and the gleam of delight on their faces when they realize they can do it.

My only regret is that I can only accommodate one or two students per semester, so the rest of the class misses the opportunity to learn an important interventional pain management skill that most ER physicians in BC do not offer.

I hope Dr Cavers' call to get doctors involved in teaching UBC medical students resonates through the medical community.

—Etela Neumann, MD
Richmond

Tray fees: When not to bill them

Recent audits have revealed a trend concerning tray fees: physicians are billing tray fees for procedures performed in a hospital; however, tray fees cannot be billed for any service performed in a funded facility, such as a hospital.

The criteria for billing tray fees are as follows:

- Tray fees are only applicable where the costs are actually incurred by the physician.
- Tray fees are only applicable in conjunction with the procedures listed in the General Services section of the Doctors of BC Guide to Fees. Other procedures will be given independent consideration by the Doctors of BC Tariff Committee.
- Tray fees are not applicable when the service is performed at a funded facility (e.g., hospital, diagnostic and treatment centre, psychiatric institution, etc.).

- Tray fees are applicable to fee code 04111 only when the procedure is rendered in private (non-funded) facilities. The fees are not applicable when the procedure is rendered in a hospital or other publicly funded facilities.

Please note that billing tray fees for procedures performed in a hospital may draw unwanted attention from the Billing Integrity Program. In addition, if you were to be audited, these billings would be considered in error.

—Keith J. White, MD
Chair, Patterns of Practice Committee

This article is the opinion of the Patterns of Practice Committee and has not been peer reviewed by the BCMJ Editorial Board. For further information contact Juanita Grant, audit and billing advisor, Physician and External Affairs, at 604 638-2829 or jgrant@doctorsofbc.ca.

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—Marshall Dahl, MD