



Peer Reviewer Monitoring: Guidelines for an Excellent Peer Review

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CIMRO’s commitment to excellence requires us to be surrounded by peer reviewers (PRs) who provide a high quality review. As part of my role as Medical Director at CIMRO, I have the unique opportunity to observe many peer reviewers’ reports. In this role, I also provide feedback with regard to how a PR might improve upon this very unique skill. Peer reviewers’ first two reviews for CIMRO are monitored, and reviews are monitored periodically thereafter. Additionally, cases might be monitored if a review fails to meet CIMRO’s quality criteria which include the following:

- Are all sections of PR Worksheet completed as applicable?
- Was clarification required by CIMRO staff?
- Was there adequate EVIDENCE-BASED rationale (with references) to support each PR determination?
- Was the documentation accurate, professional, supportive and educational?
- If handwritten, was the PR's handwriting legible?
- Was the time spent in review reasonable?

Recommendations for a quality review include making certain all reviews:

- Are legible, or preferably typed
- Are succinct, with no excessive wording
- Avoid use of questions back to the client as part of the rationale
- Avoid making determinations based on presumptions
- Include current (within five years), scholarly or peer-reviewed, evidence-based references (“Standard textbook” references of a particular discipline are acceptable if the issue is a basic management concern which seems to violate core treatment principles).

Additional tips for an excellent review:

- The reviewer should be mindful of whom the client is (usually a hospital quality committee) and how they might use the review.
- The reviewer should use a good “win-win” approach and be educational and supportive in the review (especially for feedback that is offered directly to the provider).
- The reviewer might consider providing counsel on how the hospital might approach the issue from a systems standpoint to prevent future concerns from happening.
- The reviewer should avoid making recommendations regarding disciplinary action related to the provider under review.
- The reviewer should contact CIMRO staff for clarification if unable make a determination (If an answer is undetermined based on inadequate documentation, the reviewer should contact CIMRO prior to submitting the review. CIMRO can then obtain the needed information or confirm with the client that the documentation is not available).