ICD-10 Diagnosis Documentation Tips – Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Surgery

Code Expansion in ICD-10:
Example: Septic Arthritis
❖ Primary axis: etiology (organism)
   ➢ Staphylococcal, pneumococcal, streptococcal, other, unspecified
❖ Secondary axis: anatomy
   ➢ Shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand, hip, knee, ankle and foot, vertebrae, polyarthritis, unspecified
❖ Tertiary axis: laterality NEW TO ICD-10
   ➢ Right / left / unspecified

Arthropathies:
❖ Describe type / manifestation / location / laterality / specifics
❖ Example: chronic gout, lead induced, right foot, with tophus

Fractures:
❖ Anatomic specificity / displacement / open or closed
❖ Episode of care:
   ➢ Initial [open/closed]
   ➢ Subsequent [routine healing, delayed, malunion, nonunion]
   ➢ Sequela

Acute Injuries: If known, please document the following:
❖ Nature of injury [example: MVA car vs pedestrian]
❖ Place [example: interstate highway]
❖ Activity [example: talking on cellphone]
❖ Status [example: while engaged in work activity]
ICD-10 [INPATIENT] Procedural Coding Tips – Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Surgery

Characters:
- Section – almost always medical/surgical
- Body system – should be self evident from your description
- Root operation – describes the intent of your procedure
  - Replacement – total or partial joint
  - Detachment – amputation
  - Resection – removal of all of a body part
  - Excision – removal of a portion of a body part
  - Fusion – render joint immobile
  - Release – same context as carpal tunnel
- Body part – describe with anatomic specificity
- Approach – open, percutaneous, perc endo, external [closed reduction]
- Device - describe as specifically as possible any device left in the patient
- Qualifier - Used typically to add anatomic specificity
  - Example: (partial 3rd ray resection)

Watch out for eponyms: describe multiple procedures anatomically
- Modified McBride Bunionectomy (not codeable)
  - Release of adductor hallucis tendon (codeable)
  - Release of the transverse metatarsal ligament (codeable)
  - Release of lateral capsule (codeable)
  - Excision of medial eminence, and (codeable)
  - Plication (reposition) of the capsule medially (codeable)

Recommendation
- In the heading of your operative note, list all component procedures and let the coder determine which ones should or should not be coded.