



Honoring Industry Personalities Who Make a Difference

By Ronald Hirsch, MD, FACP, CHCQM

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2018 Hirsch's Heroes Announced.

It has been my honor over the last few years to take a moment each winter holiday season to recognize people who I think have made a difference over the previous year.

It is not easy, deciding.

So many people work hard every day doing the right thing. Last year I honored Dr. Vinay Prasad, an oncologist in Oregon who wrote a book, *Ending Medical Reversal*, that will change the way any medical professional thinks about our patient care; Dr. Jen Gunter, who calls out medical pseudoscience in the *New York Times*, on Twitter, and on her blog; and Dr. Edward Hu, the president of the American College of Physician Advisors.

This year, I have three more "Hirsch's Heroes." My first honoree is actually a group of people: The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. I am sure everyone has seen those television commercials for lawyers looking to find patients harmed by medical implants. While these commercials are quite annoying, the issue they raise is actually quite real; the approval process for medical devices used in the U.S. and around the world is flawed. This group of 250 journalists in 36 countries spent a year analyzing data and writing articles on the flaws in the system and the patients who were harmed. I would suggest that all read some of those articles. You can find them online at <https://www.icij.org/investigations/implant-files/>.

My next honoree is someone who the listeners of Talk-Ten-Tuesday and readers of ICD10monitor e-News know well: Dr. Erica Remer. Dr. Remer is an emergency medicine doctor who is a clinical documentation improvement (CDI) expert. I first encountered her at an ACDIS pre-conference for physician advisors, and we immediately clicked. Her approach to CDI and teaching matched my approach to teaching and discussing Medicare regulations, which is exemplified in something she says commonly: "just tell the truth."

Last year we co-presented a session at the annual meeting of the Society of Hospital Medicine. She is also my hero, because she had the guts to leave her work as an emergency physician and physician advisor and start out on her own doing CDI education. If you don't read her ICD10monitor articles or listen to her on Talk Ten Tuesdays, you should. And one bit of trivia: Dr. Remer coached her son Scott to a fourth-place finish in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 2008, and she edited [his book on the keys to success in the spelling bee](#) which is now in its fifth edition. Thank you, Erica, for being one of my heroes.

And finally, my third honoree is someone whose career began in 1965, writing for a local newspaper. His first front-page article was titled "New Tower Plays Vital Role In Air Efficiency." From being a cub newspaper reporter for the Clairmont Sentinel, he moved into advertising and actually worked on advertising for the first McDonald's drive-in – and now he is best known as the publisher of RACmonitor and ICD10monitor. That, of course, is our own Chuck Buck.

I have had the honor of working with Chuck for the last six years, and it has been a pleasure; I really look forward to my Monitor Mondays segments to catch up with Chuck and to find out about the weather in San Diego. On Monitor Mondays and Talk-Ten-Tuesdays he manages to coordinate multiple guests, some of whom greatly surpass their designated time limits, and produce a great show every time. He has let me write articles and present webinars on whatever I think is potentially of interest to the listeners and readers, and he never stops me from being my usual sarcastic and snarky self. And for that I am grateful. Thank you, Chuck.

So, there they are: another fine group of honorees. I hope everyone has a great holiday season.

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