**Chapter 1**

**Health Information Management Profession**

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**Real-World Case 1.1**

The EHR is causing many changes in both the HIM profession and the structure of the HIM department itself. Because of the EHR, many functions of the HIM department can be performed remotely. Some HIM staff such as coders and transcriptionists are now working from home. The file areas where the paper records are housed are disappearing as more and more of the health records are electronic. These changes enable the healthcare facility to use the space previously occupied by the HIM staff and the file areas to be used for other purposes. Some healthcare organizations with multiple locations have centralized their HIM functions enabling them to standardize the HIM functions and to share staff between the facilities. The staff at the central location is able to perform most of the functions of the HIM department. There may be some staff at the healthcare facility to attend committee meetings, take authorization for release of information from patients, and perform other functions that require staff on site. Even though the employees work from home or a centralized location, the privacy and security of the patient information must be ensured at all of the locations and their productivity must meet the standards established by the organization.

# Real-World Case Discussion Questions

1. How is the EHR changing the roles of the HIM staff?

EHR is changing the roles of the HIM staff by allowing the staff to standardize their functions so they can work between different facilities. Before the EHR, most HIM staff were located within the facility they work for. Now they can work at a different location for example at home or a central location. The central location is able to do most of the HIM functions and some staff members will attend meetings, take authorization for the release of information, and more.

1. What changes would you expect from the centralization of HIM functions?

The changes I would expect from centralizing HIM functions would enable staff to specialize their job. It also allows HIM to staff to keep documents safer and more private. In comparison to staff that works directly within the facility they work for verses staff that work outside of the facility there is no longer any filing because records are electronic. There also will be faster organization that can be reached among several types of healthcare. For example, a primary care doctor through CMMC will also have records of x-rays from the CMMC hospital. Before EHR a set of x-rays were taken and then the originals or the copy would have to be retrieved directly from the hospital and mailed to the primary care doctor. Instead they are already incorporated within the organization’s EHR. Now the HIM staff doesn’t have to keep copies and copies of records. Instead, they minimize the doctor’s notes to numbers, group information together, ensure patient confidentiality, and more.

3. What is your view of the HIM profession?

# I’m not sure if I have the best understanding of the HIM profession. I imagine the HIM workers have a lot of responsibility ensuring bills are paid, insurance companies receive the correct information, coding is done properly, and patient confidentiality is ensured. I feel they are important to ensuring healthcare facilities are organized, EHR’s are prepared properly, and more. It is a job that requires a lot of attention to detail.

**Real-World Case 1.2**

One of the strengths of the HIM profession is the ability for a career path to evolve over time. Kathryn has an RHIT credential. She began working in utilization review, and then she worked in HIM department management. After 15 years of working in hospitals she was ready for a change, so she left the hospital and worked first in a consulting firm and then for an information system vendor. In both of these roles she traveled around the country. Quickly tiring of the travel, Kathryn decided to change the focus of her career path once again. Now she is an HIM educator. While Kathryn has earned both a master’s degree and a doctorate degree, it was her HIM degree and skills that allowed her to move from one career path to another.

# Real-World Case Discussion Questions

1. What career path interests you? Why?

I’m interested in a career in coding. I believe they can potentially work from home for a company or as their own coder like self-employed. I’d like to get a bachelor’s degree, too. It’s always been my goal in life to get my 4-year degree. I would like to be able to work from home and work independently. If that becomes boring, I’d like to be able to manage a group of people. My husband has a flexible schedule and I’d like to one day. Self-employment allows flexibility.

1. What are the benefits of being able to change your career path?

The benefits of being able to change your career path helps avoid your feeling burnt out. Life also happens, things don’t go as planned, perhaps I’d need to move and maybe where I move to medical coding isn’t needed but the local hospital needs help with their records, I can work there. HIM has many different opportunities. You can even grow from a clerk to a technician to a manager and beyond.

1. What did you find interesting about this case? Why?

I found that this lady sounded like a typical person who works hard but, got tired of doing a particular thing in her career, traveling. People in general get burnt out if we don’t recognize signs. By being in a career that has many opportunities, people can change their focus and mold to what works best for them.

# Application Exercises

*Instructions:* Answer the following questions.

1. Visit the AHIMA website and research the qualifications for taking each certification examination and the continuing education requirements for maintaining each credential. What similarities and differences do you see? Some similarities I see is that they all require some form of education and experience. Any course that is taken within the CAHIIM accredited college makes you automatically qualified if you graduate from the program. However, if you have experience and/or similar education, you may sit for the exam.

2. Visit the AHIMA website and learn more about the House of Delegates, including its role, the taskforces, and how it conducts business. See other homework.

3. Use the http://www.ahima.org/careers resources, including the career path, to research HIM careers and write a career plan.

 See other homework

1. You have been asked what the HIM profession is. How will you explain it? Justify why you choice it as your career.

Health information Management is part of the healthcare services. It is responsible for keeping information accurate, protected, available and shareable so other professionals can read and understand it.

**Review Quiz**

*Instructions:* For each item, complete the statement correctly or choose the most appropriate answer.

1. The first professional association for health information managers was established in what year?

a. 1900

b. 1905

c. 1928

d. 1970

2. The hospital standardization program was started by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. American Health Information Management Association

b. Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education

c. American College of Surgeons

d. Healthcare Information and Management Systems

3. The formal approval process for academic programs in health information management is called which of the following?

a. Accreditation

b. Certification

c. Registration

d. Standardization

4. Which of the following is the formal process for conferring a health information management credential?

a. Accreditation

b. Certification

c. Registration

d. Standardization

5. Which of the following is a traditional HIM role?

a. Managing interoperability standards

b. Data manipulation

c. Information governance

d. Tracking record completion

6. Which of the following functions governs the HIM profession?

a. AHIMA Board of Directors

b. AHIMA Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management

c. AHIMA House of Delegates

d. AHIMA Foundation

7. Which of the following make up a virtual network of AHIMA members?

a. AHIMA Board of Directors

b. AHIMA Council on Certification

c. AHIMA Engage

d. AHIMA House of Delegates

8. Which of the following is an arm of AHIMA that promotes research in health information management?

a. AHIMA Board of Directors

b. AHIMA CAHIIM

c. AHIMA Foundation

d. AHIMA Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management

9. Which of the following best describes the mission of AHIMA?

a. Community of professionals providing support to members and strengthening the industry and profession

b. Community of professionals whose major purpose is lobbying Congress to change laws

c. Community of credentialed members who monitor the credentialing process

d. Community of credentialed members whose purpose is to ensure jobs for their members

10. Which professional organization sponsors the CTR certification?

a. AHIMA

b. NCRA

c. AAPC

d. HIMSS

11. Someone who wishes to sit for the Certified Professional Coder (CPC) certification should contact which organization?

a. AHIMA

b. AAPC

c. HIMSS

d. AHDI

12. In order to qualify for an AHIMA fellowship, what minimal educational level is needed?

 a. Associate degree

 b. Bachelor degree

 c. Master’s degree

 d. Doctorate degree

13. Which of the following qualify for CEUs?

 a. College course

 b. Applying for fellowship

 c. Being on the AHIMA Board of Directors

 d. Participating on an AHIMA national committee

14. Critique this statement: Once someone has earned the registered health information technician (RHIT) credential, it is a lifetime certification.

 a. This is a true statement.

 b. This incorrect as it is valid only until you retire.

 c. This is incorrect as RHITs have to retake for the exam every 10 years

 d. This is incorrect as RHITs have to become recertified.

15. Which group is responsible for AHIMA’s certification exams?

 a. CCHIIM

 b. AHIMA House of Delegates

 c. AHIMA Board of Directors

 d. CAHIIM

16. State College is applying for accreditation of the new HIM program. How long do they have to complete their candidacy?

 a. 1 year

 b. 2 years

 c. 4 years

 d. 5 years

17. The two components of AHIMA’s management structure are which of the following?

 a. Staff and team

 b. Team and committee

 c. Staff and volunteer

 d. Volunteer and council

18. An RHIT who graduated from college 6 months ago is joining AHIMA for the first time. What membership is he or she qualified for?

 a. Student

 b. Emeritus

 c. New graduate

 d. Active

19. Critique this statement: an RHIT must be at least 65 years old in order to qualify for emeritus membership.

 a. This is a true statement.

 b. This is a false statement because the member must be at least 60 years old to qualify.

 c. This is a false statement because the member must be at least 70 years old to qualify.

 d. This is a false statement because the member must be at least 55 years old to qualify.

20. The requirement for an HIM professional to comply with all laws, regulations, and standards governing the practice of HIM is in the AHIMA \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 a. Mission

 b. Vision

 c. Code of ethics

 d. Engage

21. The accountability framework and decision rights to achieve enterprise information management is known as:

 a. Credential

 b. Information governance

 c. Certification

 d. Registration

22. Prior to hospital standardization, health records were:

 a. Valuable tools

 b. Strong communication methods

 c. Complete documentation of patient care

 d. Essentially worthless

23. The number of charter members of the ARLNA was:

 a. 35

 b. 17

 c. 58

 d. 82

24. To be recognized as a profession, which of the following did HIM need?

 a. Certification

 b. Registration

 c. Preliminary training

 d. Accreditation

25. The emphasis on traditional practice of HIM was to ensure:

 a. Complete and accurate health record

 b. Valid certification exams

 c. Retrieval of the health record for patient care

 d. Management of information

