**Martha Herz  
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**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?**The EHR is changing the roles of the HIM staff because employees no longer have to process piles of paperwork, store them, and no longer requires large storage rooms to be near by the HIM staff for easy access. This gives the HIM staff more flexibility. These staff members can now work from home. Large multi-location Facilities can now have centralized offices for billing, referrals and indexing because they would all still have access to the records.

**2. What changes would you expect from the centralization of HIM functions?**I expect the centralization on HIM functions is going to change the way that medical facilities are run for the better. I think that it will help standardize the processes used in the facilities and make things more productive.

**3. What is your view of the HIM profession**?  
I think that the HIM profession is an important and vital role in healthcare. I think that it a rewarding career that is always changing so you would never be bored.

**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 am most interested in becoming a professional coder. I am interested in the HIM profession as a whole because I enjoy the science of medicine but have no interest in becoming a nurse or doctor and this allows me to be surrounded in it. I also enjoy the puzzle that is trying to find the right code. I am really interest in becoming a coder because I am interested in possibly working from home one day. I would love to have a small family farm and to supplement that income with medical coding.

**2. What are the benefits of being able to change your career path?**  
We are always growing and changing as people and life circumstances change. It is important to always remain flexible in your career so that if you become unhappy doing something, or something happens and you need to find a new job you have the flexibility to find something new.

**3. What did you find interesting about this case? Why?**  
The thing I found most interesting about this case was that it showed how a real person evolves over time in their careers. We are always asked as children what we want to be when we grow up as if you choose a thing and that is what you are forever. In reality you probably are going to be forever be evolving both in life and your career.

# 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?**  
The first thing I noticed that the longer and more involved the list of requirements are the more continuing education requirements there are for the certification. The HIM and most of the specialty certifications involve an extensive amount of education and experience as requirements and require 30 CEU’s. The coding certifications require much less. Some only requires a high school diploma. They require 20 CEU’s.

**2. Visit the AHIMA website and learn more about the House of Delegates, including its role, the taskforces, and how it conducts business.**The House of Delegates is made up from members from all 52 CSAs. The House of Delegates are responsible for governing the standards of the profession including the AHIMA’s Code of Ethics and the interpretation guide, they elect the member of the AHIMA’s nominating committee (except the chairman and appointed members), they advise the board of directors in the development and modification of the association’s plans, the levy special assignments, approve amendments to the AHIMA’s bylaws, approve standing rules of the House of Delegates and approve resolutions.

**3. Use the http://www.ahima.org/careers resources, including the career path, to research HIM careers and write a career plan.**Medical Biller ---🡪 Health Information Technician ---🡪 Coding Professional --🡪 Coding Manager --🡪 Director of Coding ----Vice President of Coding ---🡪 Chief Compliance Officer

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

HIM profession is an important allied health profession that is responsible for the availability accuracy and security of clinical information. This profession has a lot to offer. It is rewarding because that information is directly related to the quality of patient care. It is always evolving so you will not get bored. It is flexible because there are many different careers available to people in the HIM profession. It is always a job that is needed everywhere because every community has a healthcare systems that needs HIM professionals.

**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

Answer: C. 1928

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

Answer: C. American College of Surgeons

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

Answer: A. Accreditation

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

a. Accreditation

**b. Certification**

c. Registration

d. Standardization

Answer: B. Certification

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

a. Managing interoperability standards

b. Data manipulation

c. Information governance

**d. Tracking record completion**

Answer: 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

Answer: AHIMA House of Delegates

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

Answer: c. AHIMA Engage

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

Answer: c. AHIMA Foundation

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

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

10. Which professional organization sponsors the CTR certification?

a. AHIMA

**b. NCRA**

c. AAPC

d. HIMSS

Answer: b. NCRA

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

Answer: b. AAPC

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

Answer: c. Master’s 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

Answer: a. College course

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.**

Answer: D. This is incorrect as RHITs hae 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

Answer: a. College course

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

Answer: b. 2 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

Answer: c. Staff and volunteer

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

Answer: c. New graduate

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.

Answer: a. This is a true statement.

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

c. Code of ethics

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

a. Credential

**b. Information governance**

c. Certification

d. Registration

Answer: b. Information governance

22. Prior to hospital standardization, health records were:

a. Valuable tools

b. Strong communication methods

c. Complete documentation of patient care

**d. Essentially worthless**

d. Essentially worthless

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

**a. 35**

b. 17

c. 58

d. 82

Answer: a. 35

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