Managing the HIM Talent Pipeline
Registered Apprenticeship Programs - Employers

Grantee: AHIMA Foundation

Funding Agency: Department of Labor/Employment and Training Agency

Grant Timeline: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2020
100% of the total cost of AHIMA Foundation American Apprenticeship Initiative grant is funded through the Department of Labor/Employment and Training Agency.
What is a Registered Apprenticeship?

- A formal system of employee training that combines on-the-job learning with related technical instruction. It is designed to produce employees competent in all aspects of a DOL registered role.

Apprenticeship Program

5-YEAR grant

Funded through a five-year, $4.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

1,000 apprentices

Number of individuals to be placed as apprentices over the next five years.

NATIONAL program

One of 46 awardees and a national program.

EMPLOYER focused

Provide immersive training, skills demonstrations and experiential learning required by employers.
"WE'RE ALWAYS HONORED TO HAVE NEW HIM PROFESSIONALS JOIN THE COMPANY, BUT SPONSORING APPRENTICES MARKS A GAME CHANGER FOR HOW GRADUATES BEGIN THEIR HEALTHCARE CAREER."

Torrey Barnhouse
President, TrustHCS, Apprentice Employer

The Details

• Provide up-skilling and certification opportunities through AHIMA, and additional professional and common employability skills training.
• Create pathways and increase growth opportunities within the health information profession
• Embed the apprenticeship model as a standard practice in health information and other healthcare verticals and grow AHIMA membership.
• Expand opportunities for underrepresented populations including, women (single working mothers), veterans, individuals with disabilities
Apprenticeship Roles

- Medical Coder/Biller
- Professional Fee Coder
- Hospital Coder/Coding Professional
- Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialist
- In-Patient Coding Auditor
- HIM Privacy & Security Officer

With the skill set of **MEDICAL CODER/BILLER**

**POSITION OVERVIEW**
Use coding conventions and guidelines to abstract, analyze and accurately assign ICD (Internal Classification of Diseases) diagnosis codes and CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) principal and secondary procedural codes to ambulatory, clinic, provider and outpatient services.

**QUALIFICATIONS**
A high school diploma, exposure to healthcare job-related functions and be at least 18 years of age.

**COMPETENCIES**
- Manage office procedures such as email, correspondence, care and maintenance of office equipment, and coding software applications
- Use and understand format, conventions, guidelines and rules of ICD-10 diagnostic and procedure coding as well as CPT procedure coding
- Comply with regulations related to fraud and abuse, understand and comprehend the reimbursement cycle including assignment of MS-DRGs and APCs
With the skill set of
PROFESSIONAL FEE CODER

POSITION OVERVIEW
Use coding conventions and guidelines to abstract, analyze and accurately assign ICD (International Classification of Diseases) diagnosis codes and CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) principal and secondary procedural codes to ambulatory, clinic, provider and outpatient services.

QUALIFICATIONS
Minimum requirements include a current credential such as CCA (Certified Coding Associate); CPC (Certified Professional Coder); or other designated credential from a nationally recognized organization.

COMPETENCIES
- Apply outpatient diagnosis and procedure codes according to current nomenclature and adherence to current regulations and guidelines.
- Ensure accuracy of APC assignment.
- Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
- Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documentation.
- Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) and Uniform Hospital Discharge Data Set (UHDDS).

With the skill set of
HOSPITAL CODER/CODING PROFESSIONAL

POSITION OVERVIEW
Use coding conventions and guidelines to abstract, analyze and accurately assign ICD (International Classification of Diseases) and CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) principal and secondary and procedural codes to inpatient, ambulatory and outpatient medical records.

QUALIFICATIONS
Current credential such as RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator); RHIT (Registered Health Information Technician); CCA (Certified Coding Associate); or other designated credential from a nationally recognized organization.

COMPETENCIES
- Apply inpatient and outpatient diagnosis and procedure codes according to current nomenclature and adherence to current regulations and guidelines.
- Ensure accuracy of MS-DRG and APC assignment.
- Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
- Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documentation.
- Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) and Uniform Hospital Discharge Data Set (UHDDS).
POSITION OVERVIEW
The Health Information Management Inpatient Coding Auditor identifies areas of under or over coding to avoid fraudulent coding and billing. Accuracy is key to reimbursement and organizational compliance. The role is responsible for ensuring documentation and coding are to the highest level of specificity; correct codes are assigned, optimal DRGs are identified, and all coding is compliant with coding and regulatory guidelines.

QUALIFICATIONS
A current credential such as RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator), RHIT (Registered Health Information Technician), CCS (Certified Coding Specialist), or other designated credential from a nationally recognized organization with at least three years of inpatient coding experience

COMPETENCIES
- Use and maintain electronic applications and work processes to support clinical classification and coding.
- Apply inpatient diagnosis and procedure codes according to current nomenclature and demonstrate adherence to current regulations and established Official Guidelines in code assignment including ICD-10-CM guidelines.
- Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural codes.
- Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
- Understand clinical indicators, common treatments, and documentation requirements for common conditions in the major diagnostic categories.
- Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative and others.

POSITION OVERVIEW
The Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialist (CDIS) is responsible for competency in coordinating and performing day to day operations, providing concurrent and/or retrospective review, and improving documentation of all conditions, treatments, and care plans to ensure highest quality of care is provided to the patient. The CDIS will also educate clinical staff in appropriate documentation criteria.

QUALIFICATIONS
An Associate’s degree in a healthcare-related field, a RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator), RHIT (Registered Health Information Technician), CCS (Certified Coding Specialist), credentialed RN (Registered Nurse) or MD (Medical Doctor) license is required.

COMPETENCIES
- Identify principal and secondary diagnoses in order to accurately reflect the patient’s hospital course utilizing ICD-10-CM with appropriate application of coding conventions and guidelines.
- Ensure accuracy of MS-DRG groupings and APC assignments.
- Promote CDI efforts throughout the organization and collaborate with physician champions to achieve initiatives.
- Foster working relationship with CDI team members.
- Query providers in an ethical manner and track compliance.
- Develop CDI policies and procedures to include query process, education and training, and performance tracking.
Program Benefits
Apprentice
Benefits for hiring

Creates career pathways and growth opportunities.
- Structured training program to include individualized training for workforce readiness based on each apprentice role.
- First attempt at an AHIMA Certification Exam paid through the grant.
- Mentoring by employer with support of the AHIMA Foundation
- Vlab access to immersion training & role specific learning modules
- Access to Apprentice Engage online community

Employer
Benefits for registering

Create industry driven workforce strategy
- First level screening/referral program for appropriate placement
- Pre-/post-assessment for roles. Post-test for Medical Coder/Biller role only.
- Opportunity to modify immersion training for some roles
- Common employability skills training to ensure work-ready apprentices
- Mentor support to include access to Mentor Engage community and AHIMA Foundation Trainers
- Opportunity to bring on apprentices at a reduced salary
- Potential for state incentives for hiring apprentices
How does it work?

The Registered Apprenticeship model combines job related instruction with on-the-job learning and progressively increases the skill level and wages of apprentices as they advance through the program.
## Employer Process

### Upskilling Internal Staff

1. **Employer**
   - Interest Survey
   - Decide on Roles & Time Line
   - Standards
   - Register with DOL
   - Apprentice
     - Register Current Staff based on role requirements
   - Training
     - Signed Apprentices Agreement
     - Immersion Training
     - Mentoring
     - On-the-job training
   - Completion
     - Certificate of Completion

### Hire External Staff

1. **Employer**
   - Interest Survey
   - Decide on Roles & Time Line
   - Standards
   - Register with DOL
   - Apprentice
     - Register based on role requirements
   - Training
     - Signed Apprentices Agreement
     - Immersion Training
     - Mentoring
     - On-the-job training
   - Completion
     - Certificate of Completion
   - Referral Requested
   - Interview
   - Employment Offered
Five Core Components of Registered Apprenticeship

- Employer Involvement
- Job Related Technical Instruction
- Structured On-the-Job Learning
- Rewards for Skill Gains
- DOL Certificate of Completion

Time is running out!

To receive the most benefits employers must be registered by August 1, 2019
Quick-Start Action Planer

AHIMA Foundation acts an intermediary to explore apprenticeship with employers

1. **Determine your workforce needs for skilled talent**
   - Do you have challenges in finding skilled talent?
   - What particular occupations?
   - What are your long-term workforce needs?
   - Determine number of apprentices needed

2. **Identify partners and resources you need (Don’t go it alone)**
   - Identify internal/external stakeholders to participate in the development of the apprenticeship program
   - Do you want to partner with local workforce agencies?
   - Are there other critical partners that are needed to be successful?
   - Will the state Department of Labor (DOL) be involved?

3. **Program Operation & Administration**
   - Obtain approval for FTE/s within organization (if necessary)
   - Create apprentice job description/job code
   - Develop wage progression schedule
   - Review/sign apprenticeship standards

4. **Apprentice Recruitment**
   - How will you select individuals to participate in your program?
   - Do you want your program to serve new entrants or up-skill incumbent workers?
   - Candidate screening
   - Interview for apprentice positions
   - Hire and onboard new apprentices
Quick-Start Action Planer
AHIMA Foundation acts as an intermediary to explore apprenticeship with employers

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- **Determine your training model**
  - AHIMA Foundation will provide access to online instruction
  - Identify skill/competency requirements
  - Identify experienced mentors at the job site
  - Develop an on-the-job learning (OJL) plan

6
- **Assess and Continuously Improve**
  - Conduct regular apprentice OJL evaluations
  - Complete apprentice experience surveys for each program stage.
  - Assess the program and participants’ success moving forward
  - Evaluate progress and make program corrections as needed
  - Continuously improve the quality of the program over time

Standard of Apprenticeship

Your organization’s guide
- Standards of Apprenticeship is the employer’s guide to the apprenticeship program and roles.
- Outlines the knowledge (competencies) and skills apprentices will learn on the job.
- May be customized to your hiring practices and company needs.
“I am very happy that AHIMA [Foundation] and the DOL have recognized the need for specialized training. Coding continues to be critical to the success of health organizations while it becomes more complex. And I, along with my peers, are caught between the need for qualified coders and the time required to train a new graduate to be competent.”

Mary B. Parks, J.D., RHIA, CCS
Director, Health Information Management
St. Joseph's/Candler

Where are employers

2019 Presentations

- February 2 – Maryland Health Information Management Association (Webinar Presentation)
- April 4 – Idaho Health Information Management Association (Boise, ID)
- May 15 – Hawaii Health Information Management Association (Honolulu, HI)
- May 17 – Michigan Health Management Association (Traverse City, MI)
- June 10 – California Health Information Association (Indian Wells, CA)
Who are our Employers

- Critical Care Hospitals
- Large Academic Hospitals
- Department of Public Health
- Long Term Care Facilities
- Communities
  - Urban
  - Rural/Critical Access Hospitals
  - Community Health
- Representing over 30 States

Current Numbers

As of 3/5/2019

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<table>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Apprentices</td>
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Myth: Apprenticeships are only for young staff or recruiting new staff. Current employees couldn’t do one.

• Fact: Apprenticeships are in fact open to all age groups and they can be beneficial career wise even for an internal employee with years of experience. Large percent of apprentices are 28 years...plus
**Myth:** This DOL grant pays for employers to hire apprentices

- **Fact:** The apprentice's salary and benefits is determined and paid by the employer for this grant. Employers may qualify for state-based tax credits available for apprenticeship program employers. Workforce systems and other community partners may provide funding for other aspects of apprenticeship programs. These benefits reduce an employer’s investment in apprenticeship costs.

**Myth:** Registered Apprenticeship Programs are costly.

- **Fact:** Apprenticeship help businesses by: 1) developing a highly-skilled workforce to meet your organization’s need, 2) help to reduce the cost of recruitment, 3) establish a pipeline of new apprentices with skills to train the next generation and 4) supports credential attainment.

- The risk of doing nothing is a far greater risk than possibly losing skilled workers to other companies. Building a larger pool of skilled workers is advantageous for all employers.
Successes

“In 2017, I wanted to add a new CDI specialist but needed help with training an inexperienced applicant – she certainly had the clinical and abstracting skills, but no coding knowledge. With support from the AHIMA Foundation Apprenticeship team and the Texas DOL we hired her for the position. The apprentice is an enthusiastic student and has progressed through the CDIP modules at a steady pace and is now preparing her first educational presentation for the Medical Staff. **She has been an ideal fit for both the apprenticeship and the job.** This educational opportunity has allowed the apprentice to work and learn at her own pace while still contributing to the facility’s CDI program.”

Brigetta Harold, RHIT, CCS
Health Information Management Director
Brownwood Medical Center

Successes

“Virtual apprenticeships hold much promise for rural areas. Some jobs that offer family-sustaining wages, such as medical coding, can be done remotely. **AHIMA [Foundation]’s slate of apprenticeships in health information management fields, including medical coding, … can be done through online classes and, additionally, some apprentices’ employers may allow the work itself to be done remotely. Employers who need to fill positions with the possibility of remote work should think about tapping the talent pool in rural areas by training local folks through apprenticeship.”

New America, Education blog
Ivey Love
Policy Analyst, Center on Education & Skills
December 5, 2017
Successes

- According to the Department of Labor, approximately, 91% of workers who complete a Registered Apprenticeship Program remain employed with the company.
- To date, 100% of the AHIMA Foundation external apprentices are still working with their initial employer.

Next Steps

- Explore options to best fit your organization’s needs
- Strategize how to best approach leaders within your organization
- Offer a customized presentation
  Provide references and contacts to other employers who have successfully launched apprenticeships
- Develop an apprenticeship proposal for your organization

Time is running out to receive the full benefit of the Grant!
Make Apprenticeships Work for your Organization

Request a personalized meeting
- Call us at 312-233-1131
- Email us at apprenticeship@ahimafoundation.org
- Fill out the apprenticeship interest survey after the webinar

“YOUR WORKFORCE IS YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET. THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THEY HAVE REPRESENT THE FUEL THAT DRIVES THE ENGINE OF BUSINESS – AND YOU CAN LEVERAGE THAT KNOWLEDGE.”
– HARVEY MACKAY
Thank You

Questions?

apprenticeship@ahimafoundation.org
ahimafoundation.org

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