Managing the HIM Talent Pipeline
Interested Career Seekers

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.

Registered Apprenticeships core components

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

Five Core Components of Registered Apprenticeship
### Apprenticeship Roles

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

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**Position Overview**

Use coding conventions and guidelines to abstract, analyze and accurately assign ICD (Internal 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**

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).

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**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 with a RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator), RHIT (Registered Health Information Technician), CCS (Certified Coding Specialist), or 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 accomplish 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.
New Proposed Role

Inpatient Coding Auditor
Apprenticeship Process

**Employer**
- Must have an open position
- Be registered with the Department of Labor
- Hire the job seeker

**AHIMA Foundation**
- Immersion Training
- Maintain database of interested career seekers
- Acts as intermediary for employers interested in apprenticeship

**Apprentice**
- Hired and maintain employment with employer
- Complete and sign apprentice agreement
- Complete apprenticeship

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.
Career Seeker Process

INTERESTED CAREER SEEKER

COMPLETED INTEREST

EMPLOYEE

APPRENTICE

COMPLETION

Interested Career Seeker

- Must have a U.S. work permit and not a H1-B visa
- Obtain/complete eligibility & requirements verified for apprentices role of interest
- Submit and complete application for each apprenticeship role of interest
- Include completed references, cover letter and resume
Completed Interest

- Employer must have an open position to be filled
- Referred to employer based on employer’s criteria
- Complete additional employer application and other requirements may be requested by employer
- Employer may offer interview
- If no job offer is received applicant is returned to interested job seeker pool

Employee

- Job offered by employer and accepted by job seeker
- Complete employer hiring documents and process
- Signs and complete apprentices agreement with employer
Apprentice

- Maintains employment with employer
- Mentor assigned by employer
- Immersion training
- Access to apprentice engage community
- On-the-job learning and mastery of competencies

Completion

- Employer determines the proficiency of competencies
- Certification of completion is provided by Department of Labor
### Employer Process

1. **Determine their workforce needs for skilled talent**
2. **Identify partners and resources they need**
3. **Receive Internal and DOL Approval for Program Operation & Administration**
4. **Decide on their Apprentice Recruitment Strategy (INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL)**
5. **Determine the training model**
6. **Assess and Continuously Improve**
Each Employer is Unique

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

“... AHIMA [FOUNDATION] APPRENTICESHIP DID HELP ME TREMENDOUSLY IN TAKING MY [CERTIFICATION] TEST. I DO FEEL LIKE IT PREPARED ME TO SIT FOR THE CCS.”

- Makema Hopes, CCS
  Hospital Coder/Coding Professional Apprentice
Program Challenges

Employer Challenges

- **Unfamiliar/Groundbreaking** - Newness of apprenticeships in healthcare and the health information profession
- **Changes in Healthcare Market** - mergers, internal training, system upgrades, budget
- **Lack of Internal Resources** - Current staff unable to mentor
- **Too Long/Too Difficult** - Delay due to employer internal approval process and/or DOL approval
- **Job Description** – Unease with bringing less experienced individuals
- **Employer Hiring Needs are Small** – employers only need small numbers to fill workforce needs. Expansion by employer does not occur regularly.
- **Market Segments** – Vendors, Veteran Administration and Unions
Career Seeker Challenges

- **Fit** - The apprenticeship program may not be fit for your career pathway.
- **Time** - The process will take time.
- **Flexibility** – Consider the types of opportunities you are willing to consider.
- **Employers needs** – 99.97% of employers use apprenticeship to upskill incumbent (current) employees.

Current Numbers

As of 12/31/18

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Apprentices</td>
<td>461</td>
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</table>
Time is running out!

Employers must be registered by August 1, 2019.

FACT OR MYTH?
Myth: Apprenticeship is a temporary job.

• **Fact:** The apprenticeship is a full-time employed position with the anticipated outcome that the role will continue after completion of the apprenticeship.

Myth: Applicants are “accepted” once the application is completed.

• **Fact:** The AHIMA Foundation does not accept or reject applications. Completed applications of interest may be referred from the pool based on the employer’s criteria as well as the role specific qualifications.
Myth: Placement in an apprenticeship is based on my completed application.

- **Fact:** The Foundation does not place apprentices or hire apprentices. Employers choose how and when they recruit and employ apprentices. We can only offer opportunities when employers chose to use the interested applicant pool.

Myth: Foundation makes the hiring decisions for apprenticeships

- **Fact:** Interested employers hire the apprentices. As apprentices are hired by the employer, benefits such as medical, dental, or vision coverage should be discussed with the employer. If requested by employers the AHIMA Foundation may refer interested job seekers for possible interviews.
Myth: The AHIMA Foundation searches for employers who meet my requirement and will offer me a job.

- Fact: The AHIMA Foundation’s apprenticeship program serves employers by providing training for hired apprentices. The focus of the program is to help employers provide related instruction to their employees.

- The AHIMA Foundation does not search for employers to fit an individual job seeker’s needs. Rather, we provide a referral service of interested candidates, who may meet the employer’s criteria, to employers for consideration. Referrals to our interested job seeker database is a no-cost resource to registered employers, however, not all employers choose to use the resource. The apprenticeship program does not guarantee a job.

Successes

- AHIMA’s first time CCS credential takers pass rate is 75%*
- To date, the AHIMA Foundation Apprenticeship first time credential takers pass rate is 94%.

Source: http://www.ahima.org/certification/CCS
“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

Tips

• The apprenticeship program should be one of your pathways to employment
• Be realistic about your career expectations
• The process will take time
• Target your resume and cover letter to potential employers
• Recommended references should include one reference from an employer and/or an educator
• Update your application anytime to make changes or revisions including after it has been submitted
• Review your application to confirm references received
• Review the Frequently Asked Questions
• Only completed and verified applications will be referred
Thank You

Questions?

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