

Data for Decisions: the State of the Profession

Save to myBoK

by Linda Kloss, RHIA, CAE

What is AHIMA's work force research telling us about the profession today?

- More than 95 percent of experienced RHITs and RHIAs report that many or some jobs are readily available
- Nearly 75 percent of RHIAs serve on their organization's electronic health record planning team
- 7.2 percent of AHIMA members work in physician offices/clinics
- 65.7 percent of RHITs foresee the need for more technology education in the future

These are just a few examples of what we've learned about the profession's workplace and work force. The work force research, supported by AHIMA's Foundation for Research and Education (FORE), provides "data for decisions." As reported earlier, major surveys of AHIMA members, graduating students, and academic program directors were completed in 2002.^{[1](#), [2](#)}

In "Who We Are: Findings from the 2002 Member Survey," the Center for Workforce Studies research team led by Paul Wing provides a first look at findings from the member survey. In "A Fresh Perspective on HIM," we learn how new graduates are embracing opportunities in this field.

How Is Work Force Data Being Used?

The board of directors, councils, and committees are using data to improve planning and decision making. Job opportunity statistics are being used by members and education programs for student recruitment.

At the same time, AHIMA staff is using data to plan new continuing education offerings. Finally, data are being shared with the healthcare trade press and used in other ways to educate and advocate for the profession.

We'll continue to analyze the survey data to learn as much as possible about the state of the profession. For example, AHIMA will soon share a deeper analysis of factors driving salary. We are studying the survey responses of members who employ other HIM professionals because these members have a unique perspective on the workplace and work force. In addition, a report of employer perspectives will be released later this year. Finally, survey databases will be made available to researchers so that even more of our questions will be answered.

You and Your Career

Work force research is about all of us in aggregate, but the feature articles that follow also offer insight and advice that you can use in your personal career development plan. In "Fighting Burnout," Harold Dahlstrand provides tips on managing the stress of today's world. Joan Beguelin, RHIA, examines the factors that may hold back our careers in "Breaking Down Barriers, Boosting Visibility."

In "A Spectrum of Opportunities: HIM Educators Needed at All Levels," Sue Biedermann, MSHP, RHIA, and Jill Burrington-Brown, MS, RHIA, describe the opportunities for HIM educators. Recruiting qualified faculty members is a key issue facing programs. So, as you are considering all the opportunities in this field, consider a role as an educator.

Notes

1. Kloss, Linda. "The Work Force Shortage Hits Home: What You Can Do." *Journal of AHIMA* 73, no. 9 (2002).
2. "Work Force Study Reveals New Picture of HIM." *AHIMA Advantage* 6, no. 8 (2002).

Article citation:

Kloss, Linda. "Data for Decisions: the State of the Profession." *Journal of AHIMA* 74, no.5 (May 2003): 21.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

Copyright 2022 by The American Health Information Management Association. All Rights Reserved.