EHR Career Opportunities: sample HIM Job Descriptions

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The migration of healthcare organizations to the electronic health record (EHR) will affect the entire HIM profession. As a result, many new and slightly altered job descriptions and titles are emerging. This trend of changing roles will continue to evolve, and opportunities await HIM professionals positioned to reach out for them.

HIM professionals must continuously evaluate and upgrade their skills and expertise to keep pace and be successful in the virtual HIM practice.[1] HIM careers today require clinical leadership and management skills and knowledge of information technology.

The sample descriptions of new HIM roles below come from an informal survey conducted among members of AHIMA's HIM Practice Transformation e-HIMTM Work Group in January 2005. These are just a few of the positions held in the e-HIM world across the US today that are filled by experienced HIM professionals and by new graduates. This list is not comprehensive. Additional roles for leadership and management positions are identified and described in AHIMA's "Vision of the e-HIM Future."[2] AHIMA's online FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge also contains resources describing other positions held by HIM professionals.

Clinical Analyst

- Format, design, and build relevant clinical content into appropriate workflows
- Lead discussions on clinical and functional design with multidisciplinary teams
- Provide key knowledge on implementation of standardized, streamlined clinical content
- Design clinical content for software applications across all care processes (including documentation, ordering, alerting and notification actions, reporting needs)
- Develop future state process and knowledge structures
- Test and troubleshoot problems within the applications
- Develop detailed content design documents
- Facilitate validation sessions with clinical researchers
- Develop and publish supporting documentation
- Exhibit excellent written and verbal communication skills

Clinical Applications Coordinator

- Implement and support multiservice software packages
- Manage the customization of site parameters
- Address integration issues with other software packages
- Review site parameters and local tables with each service for accuracy and completeness
- Coordinate implementation of new software products that cover these functions
- Analyze and evaluate processes related to information flow
- Provide training to all services on current software applications and new features
- Ensure training is scheduled for new users
- Coordinate efforts to correct deficiencies and errors that occur in the electronic record

Clinical Project Manager, Senior Project Manager

- Manage the scope of work, objectives, and other project management activities of assigned projects

- Finalize project budget and scope of work
- Act as primary project contact with sponsor to ensure appropriate communication channels are maintained and reporting schedules adhered to
- Manage project budget to meet financial and company goals (realization targets); identify and develop change orders
- Develop project plans, schedules, and other scope definition documents for assigned projects as outlined in the project operations database
- Maintain project management information and tracking systems
- Coordinate and evaluate the probability and impact of risks
- Develop plans for minimizing risk impact on project objectives
- Implement improvement processes for assigned projects

Clinical Research Associate

- Monitor activities at clinical study sites to ensure adherence to good clinical practices, standard operating procedures, and study protocols
- Review regulatory documents as required and prepare site visit reports
- Manage multiple projects
- Work both independently and in team environments
- Participate in the study development and start-up process, including reviewing protocols and designing or reviewing study follow-up
- Prepare informed consent forms
- Develop study documents
- Organize and present at investigator meetings
- Work with management on monitoring strategy
- Develop project-specific clinical research associate training
- Participate in clinical training programs and maintain awareness of developments in the field of clinical research

Clinical Vocabulary Manager

- Create, maintain, and implement terminologies, validation files, and maps for a variety of use cases in the EHR
- Perform ongoing review of the auto and manual encoder systems for terminology and classification systems, including methods and processes, and implement recommendations for improving and optimizing the encoding process
- Assist in the analysis of the enterprise's classification and grouping system assignment trends and use data from classification and grouping systems to assist in decision making
- Proactively monitor developments in the field of clinical terminologies and medical vocabularies
- Recommend the most appropriate classification or terminology systems to meet all required information reporting needs
- Possess expertise in clinical terminology, medical vocabulary, and classification systems and skill in mining, deriving, or engineering clinical ontologies

Enterprise Applications Specialist

- Possess knowledge of existing and emerging requirements related to privacy and confidentiality of health information
- Possess knowledge of existing EHR policies and procedures associated with the collection and distribution of clinical data via the repository
- Facilitate the identification, creation, implementation, and maintenance of organization policies and procedures related to the EHR
- Serve as a clinical information liaison to facilitate communication between clinical caregivers and technical implementation teams
- Maintain current knowledge of applicable federal and state EHR-related laws and accreditation standards; monitor and communicate changes to ensure organizational adaptation and compliance
- Serve as EHR consultant to the organization
- Manage multiple projects simultaneously
- Coordinate and assemble appropriate personnel for task force assignments related to EHR projects and issues
- Coordinate activities related to the integrity of the master patient index file

- Provide development guidance and coordination to ensure clinical data generated and stored in disparate clinical systems is made available in the EHR when appropriate
- Work cooperatively with the administrative director of HIM and other applicable organizational entities to ensure policies and procedures meet or exceed existing legal and regulatory requirements as related to the EHR and accepted medical record standards of practice
- Work cooperatively with privacy and security officer to ensure compliance with all existing and emerging requirements related to privacy and confidentiality of health information

Health Systems Specialist

- Possess knowledge of automated data processing
- Process file structures
- Implement applications
- Possess knowledge of data communication principles and techniques
- Develop and analyze data
- Prepare recommendations resulting from special studies

Health Information Services Department Technician

- Possess knowledge of hospital and departmental policies and procedures
- Exercise excellent communication skills
- Perform regulatory and accreditation review for the health information services department
- Summarize findings and report results
- Provide technical and administrative assistance for other health information services functions

Information Privacy Coordinator

- Monitor organizational information privacy compliance issues
- Work in collaboration with managers of technical information security to assess risks to health information security and privacy
- Establish policies and procedures to address privacy and security risks
- Draft information privacy policies and procedures and champion their approval and adoption by operational departments
- Develop training and monitoring programs to ensure employee awareness of and compliance with health information privacy policies and procedures

Integration Architect (Implementation)

- Manage the integration of all vendor applications at a single client site
- Work closely with client and installation teams to ensure the smooth and seamless flow of information and data across all client domains
- Manage the oversight and design of test scenarios, the installation process, and timely conversion of systems, which requires:
  - Clinical system integration experience
  - Installation experience with numerous clinical applications
  - Consulting experience
  - Clinical experience

Optical Imaging Coordinator

- Assist in the implementation of new systems
- Train users and provide follow-up training when required
- Monitor workflow
- Function as a liaison between health informatics and information services departments

Process Improvement Engineer

- Educate customers and transfer knowledge
- Diagnose and resolve problems
- Anticipate and address customer needs
- Function as an effective team leader
- Function as an effective team facilitator and methodology advisor
- Act as an effective team member
- Acquire and apply superior skills to achieve quality outcomes
- Respond to changing circumstances
- Manage highly complex projects

Records and Information Coordinator

- Provide reference services to all departments and levels of personnel and process incoming information
- Sort, classify, and verify coded material for integration into systems
- Create and maintain logs, computerized indexes, and databases to provide accurate status and retrieval information

Risk Management Specialist

- Assess and prevent risks that threaten the ongoing viability of the organization
- Analyze and improve patient safety and thorough managing functions
- Collect and disseminate patient safety lessons
- Lead the intervention of patient safety issues

Senior Document Coordinator

- Provide support for the processing of adverse event reports through tracking and data entry
- Generate reports
- Manage records
- Participate in continuous improvement of departmental processes and procedures
- Track timelines for completion of adverse event processing and enter data into safety database

Solution Analyst

- Provide support for clients and vendor associates working directly on client projects
- Possess expertise in field investigation and the successful resolution of service requests
- Develop education and knowledge transfer materials
- Provide documentation for requirements modeling and functional design, test products, which requires:

  - Background in healthcare, sciences, or information systems
  - Ability to work on multiple projects simultaneously
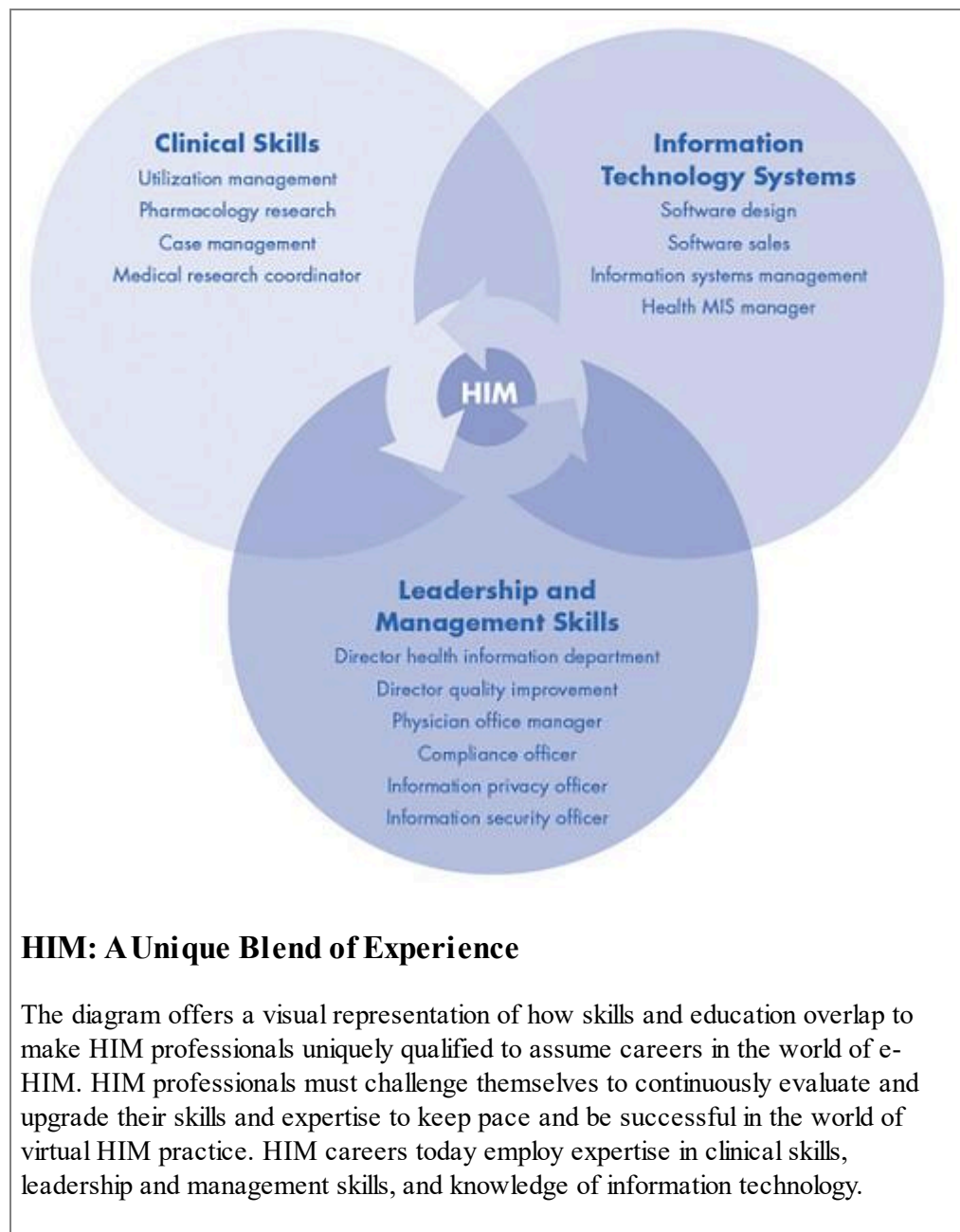 - Effective written and verbal communication skills

Solution Consultant

- Provide in-depth solution and functionality knowledge support for the sales process
- Initiate contact with clients and make sales demonstrations of solution functionality, which are customized and specific to benefits sought by the client
- Provide input on the development of marketing materials
- Take part in knowledge transfer from the sales team to the project implementation team, requiring:

  - Strong understanding of a hospital organization
  - Background in clinical information systems

  - Formal presentation experience at the executive level as well as with physicians and nurses
  - Experience presenting IT solution demonstrations

Systems Analyst

- Determine client's business and technical requirements
- Identify appropriate stakeholders
- Consult with client on alternatives to target business needs and opportunities
- Evaluate, recommend, and redesign processes
- Collect and define requirements
- Translate functional design documents
- Participate in the technical design, test planning, and user documentation processes
- Participate in analysis of client-identified issues or problems, which may require changes to procedures, standards, or systems
- Analyze business and user needs, document requirements, and revise existing systems logic difficulties as necessary
- Work with users and peers in planning, developing, implementing, and supporting new or existing applications
- Analyze and re-engineer business processes

HIM: A Unique Blend of Experience

The diagram offers a visual representation of how skills and education overlap to make HIM professionals uniquely qualified to assume careers in the world of e-HIM. HIM professionals must challenge themselves to continuously evaluate and upgrade their skills and expertise to keep pace and be successful in the world of virtual HIM practice. HIM careers today employ expertise in clinical skills, leadership and management skills, and knowledge of information technology.

Notes

1. AHIMA HIM Practice Transformation e-HIM Work Group. "HIM Practice Transformation" and "The EHR's Impact on HIM Functions." *Journal of AHIMA* 76, no. 5 (2005): 56A–G.
2. AHIMA e-HIM Task Force. "A Vision of the e-HIM Future: A Report from the AHIMA e-HIM Task Force." Available online in AHIMA's FORE Library: HIM Body of Knowledge at <u>www.ahima.org</u>.

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