

Preparing HIM for the Changes Ahead

Save to myBoK

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As we focus on education and workforce issues, there's good news and bad news.

The good news is: The employment outlook for HIM professionals is bright. According to AHIMA's 2016 Environmental Scan report, "The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the HIM profession, as a whole, will increase... by about 22 percent between 2012 and 2022."¹

But the increased demand for HIM professionals in the future will mean we'll be doing different things and using different skill sets than we are today.

Our own research supports this idea. In 2014, AHIMA conducted a workforce study to better understand the state of the HIM profession today and to identify the forces that will shape its future. A consistent theme in the study was that "almost all participants who commented on the future demand for coding professionals foresaw significant declines in demand in the next 10 years."²

AHIMA's message about career evolution is familiar, but it bears repeating: We all need to think about where we are in our careers and where we want to be in the future—and take steps to make it happen.

It can be hard to hear a message like this; change can be scary. However, AHIMA has tools to help:

- AHIMA's Council for Excellence in Education (CEE) is developing its new vision for the profession, updating Vision 2016 to "HIM Reimagined." Read about the details of their plan in this issue.
- Workforce initiatives, such as the AHIMA Foundation's "Managing the Talent Pipeline in Health Information" apprenticeship program, are in full swing.
- HIM professionals can familiarize themselves with educational and specialty competencies and understand where they need to gain new knowledge. AHIMA also has tools like the Career Map that can help people envision themselves in future roles.

More good news: We are making progress. According to our member profile, the number of AHIMA members who have earned a graduate degree is increasing. Members are getting the message and furthering their formal education.

This month's articles give us an insight into the ways the profession is redesigning itself. In "HIM's Professional Shake-Up Wake-Up," Mary Butler checks in with the CEE's work to define a new vision for the future of HIM and how it can be used by educators and HIM professionals.

Employers are looking for ways to continue the educational momentum generated by ICD-10 training in recent years. One result is the expansion of clinical documentation improvement (CDI) programs into physician practices and other areas. Dari Bonner and Karen Fancher describe documentation vulnerabilities to watch out for in "Expanding CDI to Physician Practices."

In the run-up to ICD-10, companies trained coding professionals overseas as well as at home. Paul Strafer and Cassie Milligan describe takeaways from this experience in "Lessons Learned from Training an International Workforce."

The world is changing, and we must change with it. Here's to the next round of changes.

Notes

^[1] AHIMA. "[2016 Environmental Scan Report](https://www.ahima.org/2016-environmental-scan-report)."

[2] The Caviart Group. “[Results of the AHIMA 2014 Workforce Study](#).”

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