HIM Associate Degree Entry-Level Competencies

Domains, Subdomains, and Tasks

For 2006 and beyond

I. Domain: Health Data Management

A. Subdomain: Health Data Structure, Content and Standards

1. Collect and maintain health data (such as data elements, data sets, and databases).
2. Conduct analysis to ensure documentation in the health record supports the diagnosis and reflects the patient's progress, clinical findings, and discharge status.
3. Apply policies and procedures to ensure the accuracy of health data.
4. Contribute to the definitions for and apply clinical vocabularies and terminologies used in the organization's health information systems.
5. Verify timeliness, completeness, accuracy, and appropriateness of data and data sources for patient care, management, billing reports, registries, and/or databases.

B. Subdomain: Healthcare Information Requirements and Standards

1. Monitor and apply organization-wide health record documentation guidelines.
2. Apply policies and procedures to ensure organizational compliance with regulations and standards.
3. Report compliance findings according to organizational policy.
4. Maintain the accuracy and completeness of the patient record as defined by organizational policy and external regulations and standards.
5. Assist in preparing the organization for accreditation, licensing, and/or certification surveys.

C. Subdomain: Clinical Classification Systems

1. Use and maintain electronic applications and work processes to support clinical classification and coding.
2. Apply diagnosis/procedure codes using ICD-9-CM.
3. Apply procedure codes using CPT/HCPCS.
4. Ensure accuracy of diagnostic/procedural groupings such as DRG, APC, and so on.
5. Adhere to current regulations and established guidelines in code assignment.
6. Validate coding accuracy using clinical information found in the health record.
7. Use and maintain applications and processes to support other clinical classification and nomenclature systems (such as ICD-10-CM, SNOMED, and so on).
8. Resolve discrepancies between coded data and supporting documentation.

D. **Subdomain: Reimbursement Methodologies**

1. Apply policies and procedures for the use of clinical data required in reimbursement and prospective payment systems (PPS) in healthcare delivery.

2. Support accurate billing through coding, chargemaster, claims management, and bill reconciliation processes.

3. Use established guidelines to comply with reimbursement and reporting requirements such as the National Correct Coding Initiative.

4. Compile patient data and perform data quality reviews to validate code assignment and compliance with reporting requirements such as outpatient prospective payment systems.

II. Domain: Health Statistics, Biomedical Research, and Quality Management

A. **Subdomain: Healthcare Statistics and Research**

1. Abstract and maintain data for clinical indices/databases/registries.

2. Collect, organize, and present data for quality management, utilization management, risk management, and other related studies.

3. Compute and interpret healthcare statistics.

4. Apply Institutional Review Board (IRB) processes and policies.

5. Use specialized databases to meet specific organization needs such as medical research and disease registries.

B. **Subdomain: Quality Management and Performance Improvement**

1. Abstract and report data for facility-wide quality management and performance improvement programs.

2. Analyze clinical data to identify trends that demonstrate quality, safety, and effectiveness of healthcare.

III. Domain: Health Services Organization and Delivery

A. **Subdomain: Healthcare Delivery Systems**

1. Apply information system policies and procedures required by national health information initiatives on the healthcare delivery system.

2. Apply current laws, accreditation, licensure, and certification standards related to health information initiatives from the national, state, local, and facility levels.

3. Apply policies and procedures to comply with the changing regulations among various payment systems for healthcare services such as Medicare, Medicaid, managed care, and so forth.

3. Differentiate the roles of various providers and disciplines throughout the continuum of healthcare and respond to their information needs.

B. **Subdomain: Healthcare Privacy, Confidentiality, Legal, and Ethical Issues**
1. Participate in the implementation of legal and regulatory requirements related to the health information infrastructure.
2. Apply policies and procedures for access and disclosure of personal health information.
3. Release patient-specific data to authorized users.
4. Maintain user access logs/systems to track access to and disclosure of identifiable patient data.
5. Conduct privacy and confidentiality training programs.
6. Investigate and recommend solutions to privacy issues/problems.
7. Apply and promote ethical standards of practice.

IV. Domain: Information Technology and Systems

A. **Subdomain: Information and Communication Technologies**
1. Use technology, including hardware and software, to ensure data collection, storage, analysis, and reporting of information.
2. Use common software applications such as spreadsheets, databases, word processing, graphics, presentation, e-mail, and so on in the execution of work processes.
3. Use specialized software in the completion of HIM processes such as record tracking, release of information, coding, grouping, registries, billing, quality improvement, and imaging.
4. Apply policies and procedures to the use of networks, including intranet and Internet applications to facilitate the electronic health record (EHR), personal health record (PHR), public health, and other administrative applications.

B. **Subdomain: Data, Information, and File Structures**
1. Apply knowledge of data base architecture and design (such as data dictionary, data modeling, data warehousing) to meet departmental needs.

C. **Subdomain: Data Storage and Retrieval**
1. Use appropriate electronic or imaging technology for data/record storage.
2. Query and generate reports to facilitate information retrieval.
3. Design and generate reports using appropriate software.
4. Maintain archival and retrieval systems for patient information stored in multiple formats.
5. Coordinate, use, and maintain systems for document imaging and storage.

D. **Subdomain: Data security**
1. Apply confidentiality and security measures to protect electronic health information.
2. Protect data integrity and validity using software or hardware technology.
3. Apply departmental and organizational data and information system security policies.
4. Use and summarize data compiled from audit trail and data quality monitoring programs.
5. Contribute to the design and implementation of risk management, contingency planning, and data recovery procedures.

E. **Subdomain: Healthcare Information Systems**
1. Participate in the planning, design, selection, implementation, integration, testing, evaluation, and support for organization-wide information systems.
2. Use the principles of ergonomics and human factors in work process design.

V. Domain: Organizational Resources

A. **Subdomain: Human Resources**
1. Apply the fundamentals of team leadership.
2. Organize and contribute to work teams and committees.
3. Conduct new staff orientation and training programs.
4. Conduct continuing education programs.
5. Monitor staffing levels and productivity standards for health information functions, and provide feedback to management and staff regarding performance.
6. Communicate benchmark staff performance data.
7. Prioritize job functions and activities.
8. Use quality improvement tools and techniques to monitor, report and improve processes.

B. **Subdomain: Financial and Physical Resources**
1. Make recommendations for items to include in budgets and contracts.
2. Monitor and order supplies needed for work processes.
3. Monitor coding and revenue cycle processes.
4. Recommend cost-saving and efficient means of achieving work processes and goals.
5. Contribute to work plans, policies, procedures, and resource requisitions in relation to job functions.