CHAPTER 2

Health Information Professionals
Pretest (True/False)

• The American Health Information Management Association was originally called the Association of Record Librarians of North America.

• In many healthcare facilities, the CIO manages both the HIM and IT departments.

• In hospital settings, Registered Health Information Technicians (RHITs) supervise Registered Health Information Administrators (RHIAs).

• A DRG coordinator facilitates reimbursements from Medicare.

• One of the jobs of the APC coordinator is to verify that the correct ICD-9-CM and HCPCS codes have been used on an outpatient claim.
History of HIM Organizations

- 1918: American College of Surgeons Hospital Standardization Program requires hospitals to keep “accurate and complete medical records for all patients, filed in an accessible manner”
- 1928: medical records clerks form the Association of Record Librarians of North America
- 1941: name changes to American Association of Record Librarians
- 1970: name changes to American Medical Record Association
- 1991: name changes to American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)
Patient Records: Processing and Handling

• Efforts improved over time
  – Early efforts included:
    ▪ Analyzing patient charts for deficiencies and obtaining missing items
    ▪ Tracking, storing, retrieving, and indexing charts
    ▪ Creating forms committees to standardize what appeared on specific forms (now called forms control)
Workflow of Traditional Charts

1. Forms Control
2. Notes are recorded
3. HIM analyzes chart
4. Chart is abstracted and assigned codes for billing
5. Chart is examined for completeness
6. Chart is filed

Figure 2-1  Flow of inpatient information using a paper chart.
Evolution of HIM

• Caused by:
  – Regulatory reporting, billing, and accreditation requirements made abstracting, aggregating, and reporting information collected from patient charts HIM functions
  – Computerization of health information
  – Institute of Medicine (IOM) mandate for creation of “an electronic patient record”
  – HIPAA
Overview of Health Information Field

• Some health information jobs are more prevalent in inpatient acute care facilities than outpatient settings
  – Example: large hospital may have a number of coding specialists

• Some jobs are outsourced to companies specializing in a particular service
  – Examples: medical transcription, computer security, system trainers
Figure 2-3  Abridged organizational chart for an acute care HIM department.
Health information manager:
- Manages HIM department
- Implements and monitors HIM systems, policies, and procedures
- Educates employees
- Enforces policies
- Requires bachelor’s or master’s degree and AHIMA certification exam to be RHIA
HIM Department Professionals (continued)

• Health information technician:
  – Enters medical records data into computer systems
  – Validates accuracy and completeness of records
  – Performs other tasks as determined by needs and training
  – Requires associate degree and AHIMA certification to become Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT)
HIM Department Professionals (continued)

• Coding specialists:
  – Clinical data specialists
  – Clinical coding and reimbursement specialists

• Reimbursement specialists:
  – DRG coordinators
  – APC coordinators
Other HIM professionals:
- Medical transcriptionists
- Cancer or tumor registrars
- HIM compliance specialists
- Optical imaging coordinators
HIM and IT Comparison

- **HIM**: concerned with security, accuracy, and completeness of health records and the information reported in them
- **IT**: concerned with operation of HIS computers as well as phone systems and other computers
- **Both**: managed by CIO
Figure 2-4  Abridged organizational chart for a hospital IT department.
IT Department Organization

• Information services (IT) director or manager:
  – Oversees hospital computer systems, and infrastructure of health information system
  – Supervises computer network, databases, programming, applications, network security, administration, database administration, strategic planning, and telecom system
  – Works closely with HIM director
IT Department Organization

- Clinical Project Manager and IT Project Managers
  - Help organizations determine scope of work, objectives, budget, schedule, responsibilities
  - Track progress of each component, advise management when projects are off budget or schedule
  - Positions involve attention to detail, planning, risk analysis, and communication skills
  - Both clinical project managers and IT project managers do the same work, within their respective areas of the organization
  - They communicate with each other frequently when two areas overlap
Other IT personnel include:

- Clinical analysts
- Clinical vocabulary managers
- Clinical applications coordinators
- Data quality managers
- Data resource administrator
- Decision support analyst
- HIS department technicians
• Other IT personnel include:
  – Enterprise applications specialists
  – Integration architects
  – Health systems specialists
  – Solution analysts
  – Solution consultants
  – Systems analysts
  – Information security managers
  – Records and information coordinators
Nonclinical Allied Health Professions

- Do not involve medical or diagnostic services to the patient
- Handle and safeguard medical information vital to those who provide direct services
- Includes all HIS, IT, HIM, and HIT professions
- Examples: medical office managers, registration and scheduling clerks, medical transcriptionists, computer system analysts, billing and coding specialists
- Privacy Officer and Security Officer – found in every acute and ambulatory facility
Nonclinical Allied Health Professions: Skill Set Requires Attention to Detail

- Ensure successful operation of healthcare delivery system
- HIM functions include compiling, storing, retrieving, and controlling access to patient’s records
- Other HIM functions include coding, abstracting, and aggregating health information for billing, reporting, and research
- HIS/IT functions involve computerization of records, and developing and maintaining systems that deliver them
Importance of Multiple Skill Sets

- Development of computerized patient health records and delivery systems are continuing to create merger between HIM and HIS/IT departments
- Today’s students should become acquainted with multiple skill sets regardless of career choices
- Skills to learn: medical terminology, computer technology, health information management, workflow, project management, accounting principles, time management and budgeting principles
HIM and IT: Overlapping Skills

Figure 2-5 Overlapping skill sets of the HIM or IT worker.
Tips From the Field

- Learn medical vocabulary
- Embrace technology
- Learn about what physicians do
- Think big picture; how does your profession fit within all of the processes at your facility?
- Understand workflow; what is being done and how?
- Learn a little project management; how do you break down a project into tasks or estimate a timeline?
- Learn a little accounting because it will be helpful across disciplines