

J. Sargeant Reynolds
Community College



Health Records Coding Technician

CAREER STUDIES CERTIFICATE
School of Nursing and Allied Health

INFORMATION PACKAGE



Dear Future Student:

Thank you for your recent inquiry into the Health Records Coding Technician Program. This college-level Career Studies Certificate Program offers you a path to a rewarding career in an allied health field in approximately three semesters (one calendar year.) It can also be easily arranged as a part-time program for those of you who must continue to work full-time and thus need a part-time college program schedule. Most of the courses are currently offered in the evening, and many do require computer work as a part of the coursework.

Health Records Coding Technicians need the following attributes:

- High level of accuracy
- Investigative thinking
- Ability to work independently
- Desire for detailed work
- Assertive communication skills

If you possess any of these skills and wish to become a Health Records Coding Technician, this program will help you develop the skills needed for a successful and rewarding career in the allied healthcare field. You will find informative material about this career in following pages. Please read this information carefully and then contact the program director for advising.

We are pleased that you have inquired into this exciting and challenging career option. We welcome the opportunity to assist you in your entry into the program.

Please call me if I can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

William “Bill” Wilson
Program Director
WWilson@reynolds.edu
(804) 523-5582

Health Records Coding Technician Career Studies Certificate

Career Description

Assisted by specialized computer equipment and software, Health Records Coding Technicians analyze and interpret the patient's record to determine the proper standardized code that represents the patient's diagnosis and treatment. These codes may be used to create accurate standardized records, to maintain health statistics, or for billing purposes. This program is designed to provide the technical knowledge and skills, along with the practical experience, needed for employment as a health records coding technician.

Career Opportunity

a. Salary

According to recent national data, the median salary for accredited Coders was \$31,200 per year and for those employed by the Federal government the median salary was \$27,570. In the Richmond area, salaries may range from \$20,000 to over \$35,000 annually, depending on credentials, level of responsibilities and years of experience.

b. Occupational Objectives

Health Records Coding Technicians work in a wide variety of capacities in the health care industry. These may include positions in hospitals, outpatient hospital departments, long-term care facilities, physicians' practices, health insurance companies, governmental agencies, analytical and statistical health agencies, and legal firms. Coders usually work in offices, those who have greater experience may later - work out of their homes, work as freelance consultants, or own their own businesses. Students who do not already work in the medical records field are encouraged to begin work in this area while a student if possible and to take the certification exam as soon as possible after program completion. Both experience in the health records field and certification (see below) are definite assets when seeking employment in this field.

c. Growth Outlook

Changes in the healthcare delivery system in the US have expanded the role of the Health Information Management department and established coding as a high priority. This has created a demanding, competitive and technical field. According to recent Virginia data there are approximately 200 job openings in this field per year, with most openings due to growth.

Admission Process

a. Testing Requirements

College placement testing in reading and writing (*recommended if you are planning to complete a degree in the future, not required for this certificate program*)

b. Application & Forms

College Application and College transcripts requests if you have previously taken classes that you believe will transfer to JSRCC and count toward this certificate.

c. Costs

Textbooks for the entire program are approximately \$900. No medical exam or other fees are required. Check the college website for the current tuition rates.

d. Transfer Information

While there are no direct transfer opportunities with this program, these courses can lead to other degrees in Health Information Services.

e. Computer Requirements

ITE 115 or successful completion of a Computer Literacy exam for ITE 115 given in the testing center.

National Certification

Upon satisfactory completion of the program, students will be eligible (and encouraged) to take the national accrediting exams offered by AHIMA and the AAPC. After passing these exams you are awarded a professional credential status, which confirms your competency levels to your managers, peers, employers, and prospective employers.

Program Length/Courses

If you are able to take courses full-time you should be able to complete this program in one calendar year. The program accepts new students in the Fall and Spring semesters only. Many students, however, because of job and life demands will choose to take a slower, more part-time approach and complete the program in one to two years.

Most of the courses are taught online which will require computer access to complete the coursework.

Computer Competency Requirement

All applicants must pass the computer competency exam, administered in the testing centers at each campus, **or** successfully complete ITE 115, CSC 155 or an equivalent prior to completion of the program. Students not passing the computer competency exam may retake the exam only once.

Health Record Coding Certificate

| COURSE | TITLE | CREDIT HOURS | Semesters This course is offered |
|--|--|-----------------|--|
| First Semester | | | |
| Computer Competency Exam, ITE 115 or CSC 155 prior to HIM 254 | | | |
| HLT 143* | Medical Terminology | 3 | F, Spr, Sum |
| NAS 150* | Human Biology | 3 | F, Spr, Sum |
| HIM 150 | Topics in Health Records Management | 3 | F, Spr |
| Total | | 9 | |
| Second Semester | | | |
| NUR 136** | Pharmacology | 1 | F, Spr, Sum |
| HIM 110** | Concepts of Human Pathology | 3 | F, Spr, Sum |
| HIM 226 | Legal Aspects of Health Record Documentation | 2 | Spr, Sum |
| HIM 253 | Health Records Coding | 4 | Spr, Sum |
| Total | | 10 | |
| Third Semester | | | |
| HIM 254*** | Advanced Coding and Reimbursement CPT | 4 | F, Sum |
| HIM 295*** | Topics in Advanced Health Records Coding | 2 | F, Sum |
| HIM 143 | Managing Electronic Billing in Medical Practice | 2 | F, Sum |
| HIM 151 | Reimbursement Issues in Medical Practice Management | 2 | Spr, Sum |
| Total | | 29 | |

*HLT 143 and NAS 150 must be taken prior to HIM 253 and HIM 110

**HIM 110 and NUR 136 must be taken together

*** HIM 254 and HIM 295 must be taken together

NOTICE to ALL Health Record Coding Students

Re: Future Class Schedules for Health Record Coding (HIM courses)

We will be offering the following classes each semester as listed below. Advising is strongly recommended so that you do not get your class schedule out of sequence and cause a delay in your course progress. Bill Wilson is the advisor for all HIM students. When you have completed all of your classes you MUST go to the www.reynolds.edu website and print out the Graduation Application. You must then fill this out and take it to the Admissions department so that you will receive your certificate.

Contact information: William "Bill" Wilson
DTC Room 542
WWilson@reynolds.edu
(804) 523-5582

Option 1: Fall Program Start

| If Student Starts in the Fall follow this schedule |
|--|
| Fall semester HIM 150 HLT 143 NAS 150 (ITE 115 if needed) |
| Spring semester HIM 253 HIM 110 NUR 136 HIM 226 |
| Summer semester HIM 254 HIM 295 HIM 143 HIM 151 |

Option 2: Spring Program Start

| If Student starts in the Spring follow this schedule |
|--|
| Spring semester HIM 150 HLT 143 NAS 150 (ITE 115 if needed) |
| Summer semester HIM 253 HIM 110 NUR 136 HIM 226 |
| Fall semester HIM 254 HIM 295 HIM 143 HIM 151 |

****The HIM curriculum does not begin in the summer because we do NOT offer HIM 150 in the summer. If you have taken some of the required classes previously, you will need to wait and fall in line with one of the course sequences above.**