Medical Coding Certificate

Occupation Overview

Medical coders are some of the most sought-after professionals in the health care industry.

Between now and 2024, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts employment growth for medical coders and billers to be at least 15%, which is much faster than the average growth for all occupations. Certified medical coding offers a great career with excellent income, strong employment potential and the ability to work from home.

Medical coders, also commonly referred to as health information technicians, organize and manage health information data. They ensure the quality, accuracy, accessibility, and security of health information in paper files, electronic systems, and medical and billing claims. They use various classification systems to code and categorize patient information for insurance reimbursement purposes, for databases and registries, and to record and maintain patients' medical and treatment histories.

Medical coders review health information and convert it into medical codes for billing purposes. Every medical visit results in at least two codes, one for the service provided by the practitioner and another to convey the diagnosis, or reason, for that service. Medical coding professionals ensure that these codes are applied correctly during the billing process and serve as advocates for medical facilities, health practitioners and patients. In maximizing the accuracy of claims and compliance levels, skilled medical coders optimize the billing process and lower health care costs throughout the entire industry.

Job Demand

Medical coding is an "in demand" job for the state of Ohio and certified medical coders have been predicted to hit a national shortage due to the transition from ICD-9 to ICD-10 and as the field of Health Information Management (HIM) continues to change and evolve in complexity.

Certificate Program

The University of Rio Grande offers a Medical Coding Certificate that not only prepares students to sit for national certification through the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC), but also fully rounds out the students medical coding and billing education, which helps to expand the student's medical office skill set and employment options. A Medical Coding Certificate from the University of Rio Grande is a 32-credit hour program designed to be completed in two semesters, or less than one year. The program starts every fall and completes the following spring semester. The program is currently offered at the institution's Jackson and Meigs academic centers.

Occupations

Students who obtain a Medical Coding Certificate will be well qualified to obtain a Certified Professional Coder (CPC) credential. They will be prepared for an entry-level career as an ED coder, medical coding specialist, medical billing clerk, medical auditing specialist, health information technician, and clinical data specialist, to name a few. They will have the potential to advance into more advanced health information and compliance careers, especially with additional academic instruction. Medical coders work in settings that range from clinics and hospitals, private physician practices, nursing and outpatient care facilities, medical billing services, and home.

The Medical Coding certificate at the University of Rio Grande prepares students for the multifaceted duties and challenges found in today's ever-evolving health information environment. It develops students' interpersonal ("people") skills, prepares them with strategies to take their certification exam, coaches them toward a competitive job search process, and makes them an asset in the workplace from the very first day in their new career.

Medical Coding Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF RIO GRANDE/RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ONE-YEAR CODING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

FALL   **Credit Hours**

AHC	20303	ICD Coding	3
AHC	13303	Medical Terminology I	3
AHC	10501	Healthcare Compliance and Ethics	1
AHC	22203	Healthcare Reimbursement	3
BIO	11204	Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology (preferred) OR	4
BIO	10104	Principles of Anatomy & Physiology I	
ENG	11103	Composition I*	3
		TOTAL	**17**

SPRING

AHC	21203	CPT Coding	3
AHC	10302	Electronic Health Record	2
AHC	14301	Medical Terminology II	1
AHC	22403	Pharmacology & the Human Body	3
LA	20303	Gateway to Workforce	3
COM	11303	Fund. of Speech Communication	3
		TOTAL	**15**

Placement depends on entrance exam.

MEDICAL CODING COURSES
REQUIRED FOR AAPC CERTIFICATION EXAM

FALL   **Credit Hours**

AHC	20303	ICD Coding	3
AHC	13303	Medical Terminology I	3
BIO	11204	Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology (preferred) OR	4
BIO	10104	Principles of Anatomy & Physiology I	
		TOTAL	**10**

SPRING   **Credit Hours**

AHC	21203	CPT Coding	3
AHC	14301	Medical Terminology II	1
AHC	22403	Pharmacology & the Human Body	3
		TOTAL	**7**

The above curriculum is what would be taken by students who only want to prepare for the AAPC (American Academy of Professional Coders) certification exam.

Contact information:

Hilliary Blakeman, MHA, RHIA, CPC-A
Instructor of Medical Coding
740-288-0284 • hblakeman@rio.edu

Beth Zinn, MSC
Director – Jackson Center
740-288-0284 • bzinn@rio.edu

UNIVERSITY OF
RIO GRANDE
AND RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

800.282.7201 • rio.edu