



HIMAA

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES



HIMAA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

WHO WE ARE, OUR VALUES, AND OUR PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The Health Information Management Professional shall undertake practice of the profession with honesty and integrity and in doing so they will bring honour and respect to the profession through their words and deeds.

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Acknowledgements

These practice guidelines have been developed by the Practice Quality & Safety Standards Committee of the Health Information Management Association of Australia Limited to provide HIMAA Members with a set of definitions, values and professional practice guidelines to follow in the conduct of their duties to ensure the people and the organisations they serve have access to quality health information services.

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HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

WHO ARE WE?

The health information management professional applies their knowledge and skills to create, acquire, analyse and/or manage information to meet the clinical, legal, ethical and/or administrative requirements of the health care system.

The HIMAA Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards¹ define the knowledge and skills required of a health information management professional. A health information management professional may apply some or all of the HIMAA Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards in their daily professional practice.

Two examples of health information professionals are Health Information Managers (HIM) and Clinical Coders (CC). Health Information Managers can also practice as clinical coders and often specialise in this area.

Health Information Manager (HIM)

A Health Information Manager (HIM) is a health information management professional with a HIMAA-accredited undergraduate or postgraduate university degree who plans, develops, implements and manages health information services, such as patient information systems, and clinical and administrative data, to meet the medical, legal, ethical and administrative requirements of health care delivery, or who teaches or does research in these areas². A Health Information Manager through their skills and expertise will often specialise in Clinical Coding.

A Health Information Manager meets all of the HIMAA Entry Level Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards as a result of their HIMAA accredited tertiary education. They may apply some or all of the HIMAA Intermediate and Advanced Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards depending on their experience and professional development.

Clinical Coder (CC)

A Clinical Coder is a health information management professional who is a graduate of a HIMAA-approved clinical coding course or a HIMAA-accredited tertiary course who assigns codes to narrative descriptions of patients' diseases, operations and procedures in accordance with recognised classification systems to allow for easy storage, retrieval and analysis of health data³.

A Clinical Coder specialises in a subset of the HIMAA Entry Level Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards. They can be a qualified Health Information Manager with a HIMAA-accredited undergraduate or post graduate university degree who has specialised in clinical coding, or a graduate of an approved VET-level clinical coding course, such as those offered by HIMAA.

¹http://himaan2.org.au/sites/default/files/HIMAA_HIM_Entry_Level_Compencies_Version_2_January_2013_0.pdf

²Based on Australian Bureau of Statistics ANZSCO Unit Group 2242 at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Product+Lookup/1220.0~First+Edition,+Revision+1~Chapter~UNIT+GROUP+2242+Archivists,%20Curators%20and%20Records%20Managers>

³Based on Australian Bureau of Statistics ANZSCO Unit Group 5999 at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/BF8FE130F6F4D3D4CA2575DF002DA603?opendocument>

HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

Value Proposition

Health information management professionals apply their knowledge and skills to create, acquire, analyse and/or manage information to meet the medical, legal, ethical and/or administrative requirements of the health care system. Two examples of health information professionals are Health Information Managers (HIM) and Clinical Coders (CC).

The HIMAA Health Information Manager (HIM) Competency Standards⁴ define the comprehensive range of knowledge and skills of a health information management professional. A health information management professional may apply some or all of these competency standards in their daily professional practice.

The statements below are designed to assist members in representing the value of health information management professionals to each stakeholder segment.

| Who We Support | How We Add Value |
|--|---|
| Patients / Public | Health information management professionals ensure your health information is kept confidential and secure and is available to clinicians when you come to see them. |
| Clinicians | Health information management professionals ensure quality patient information is available to you when you provide patient care. |
| Government | Health information management professionals ensure quality information is available to support decision making about and funding of the healthcare system. |
| Funders | Health information management professionals ensure that quality information is available for billing, revenue and funding purposes. |
| Employers in healthcare delivery | Health information management professionals ensure quality information is available to support the management of all clinical and business functions in the organisation. |
| IT/health informatics professionals | Health information management professionals manage all aspects of the relationship between data and information in information systems. |
| Researchers | Health information management professionals ensure that quality information is available for research purposes. |

⁴http://himaa2.org.au/sites/default/files/HIM_Competencies_Version_3_0_Consultation_Draft_October_2014.pdf

THE HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Value Proposition

The Health Information Management Association of Australia promotes and supports health information management professionals as the universally recognised specialists in information management at all levels of the healthcare system. We do this through positioning and advocacy, accreditation, education and training, certification and credentialing, quality standards, publications and resources, and HIMAA membership networking activities at local and national levels, including an annual national conference of international standing.

The statements of value below are to assist members in representing the value of HIMAA to each stakeholder segment.

| Who We Support | How We Add Value |
|--|---|
| Patients / Public | HIMAA sets the standards for how your information is managed in the healthcare system. |
| Clinicians | HIMAA sets the standards for how quality health information is managed in the healthcare system. |
| Government Funders Researchers | HIMAA is the peak body for standards and management of health information in the healthcare system. |
| Employers in healthcare delivery | HIMAA provides assurance that the health information management professionals you employ are qualified and have the appropriate knowledge and skills for the role. |
| IT/health informatics professionals | HIMAA sets the standards for how health information is managed in health information systems. |
| Members | HIMAA represents supports and equips you through our positioning and advocacy, education and training, quality standards, publications and resources, and HIMAA membership networking activities. |
| Non-Members Students | HIMAA is able to represent, support and equip you through our positioning and advocacy, education and training, quality standards, publications and resources, and HIMAA membership networking activities through membership of the profession. |

HIMAA MEMBER PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

These ten principles replace the HIMAA Code of Ethics of 1992 and 2005. The HIMAA Member Principles of Professional Practice were developed by the HIMAA Practice Quality & Safety Standards Committee and approved by the HIMAA Board on 22 February 2015.

In general, the Health Information Management Professional shall undertake practice of the profession with honesty and integrity and in doing so they will bring honour and respect to the profession through their words and deeds.

As a condition of membership, HIMAA members agree to:

1. Advocate, uphold, and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information taking into account applicable legislation.
2. Show courtesy to and respect the rights of all professional colleagues.
3. Undertake their professional duties in an ethical, efficient, legitimate, safe and responsible manner.
4. Not engage in (and report) dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or other forms of illegal or unethical conduct that adversely reflect on the profession or the individual's fitness for membership in the profession.
5. Make determinations within the professional scope of assigned responsibilities and knowledge.
6. State truthfully and accurately any professional credentials, education and experience.
7. Discharge honourably the responsibilities of any national or branch/network association position.
8. Advance health information management knowledge and quality practice through continuing participation in education, research, publications, presentations and interdisciplinary collaboration.
9. Recruit and mentor students, staff, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen the professional workforce.
10. Contribute to the planning and proactive development of services which enable individuals within the community to achieve optimum health.

HIMAA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

These Practice Guidelines for Health Information Management Professionals were developed by HIMAA's Practice Quality and Safety Standards Committee from the HIMAA Member Principles of Professional Practice introduced in February 2015, and approved by the HIMAA Board in October 2015

In general, the Health Information Management Professional shall undertake practice of the profession with honesty and integrity and in doing so they will bring honour and respect to the profession through their words and deeds.

The following ten guidelines are cross-referenced with HIMAA's Entry Level HIM Competency Standards. Under each Guideline below, the Domains and Sub-Domains to which the Guideline has been cross referenced are noted. These Competency Domains are:

- A. Generic Professional Skills
- B. Health Information and Records Management
- C. Language of Medicine
- D. Healthcare Terminologies and Classification
- E. Research Methods
- F. Health Services Organisation and Delivery
- G. Health Information Law and Ethics
- H. eHealth
- I. Health Information Services Organisation and Management

The full cross referencing document is available at APPENDIX 1.

Members of the Health Information Management Association of Australia (HIMAA) shall:

1. Advocate, uphold, and defend the individual's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality in the use and disclosure of information taking into account applicable legislation.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A7, B, G, H, I2

1.1 Protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service. Disclose only information that is directly relevant or necessary to achieve the purpose of disclosure. Release information only with valid authorisation, or as authorised by federal or state regulations.

1.2 Respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions.

1.3 Ensure compliance with current Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation, licensing and standards pertaining to the management of health information

1.4 Implement standards, policies and procedures related to access, amendment, release and disclosure of identifiable and non-identifiable personal health information in response to current laws, regulations and governing organisational standards / policies.

1.5 Safeguard and preserve information privacy whilst ensuring that information is readily accessible and appropriately shared within the organisation for patient care and operational purposes.

1.6 Respond promptly and appropriately to patient requests to exercise their privacy rights (e.g., access, amendments, restriction, confidential communication, etc.).

1.7 Take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties using computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology.

1.8 Protect the security of data within health information systems by ensuring the application of appropriate anti-viral software, firewalls, security access levels for users and functionality of conducting audit trails.

1.9 Transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records.

1.10 Develop formal processes to address information privacy breaches.

1.11 Implement education and training programs related to organisation wide privacy, right to information, confidentiality and security principles, policies and procedures for health information management systems

1.12 Safeguard the privacy and security of written and electronic health information and other sensitive information. Take reasonable steps to ensure that health information is stored securely and that patients' data is not available to others who are not authorized to have access. Prevent inappropriate disclosure of individually identifiable information

1.13 Protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service.

1.14 Disclose only information that is directly relevant or necessary to achieve the purpose of disclosure.

1.15 Release information only with valid authorisation from a patient or a person legally authorised to consent on behalf of a patient or as authorised by federal or state regulations. The minimum necessary standard is essential when releasing health information for disclosure activities.

1.16 Respond promptly and appropriately to patient requests to exercise their privacy rights (e.g., access, amendments, restriction, confidential communication, etc.). Answer truthfully all patients' questions concerning their rights to review and annotate their personal biomedical data and seek to facilitate patients' legitimate right to exercise those rights.

2. Show courtesy to and respect the rights of all professional colleagues

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A4, A6, A7, B

2.1 Practice within a professional and ethical HIM framework

- 2.2 Contribute to the maintenance of a healthy work and learning environment that is respectful, safe and supportive of all colleagues
- 2.3 Engage with a wide range of stakeholders at all levels to promote health information best practice
- 2.4 Establish professional relationships and consult collaboratively
- 2.5 Demonstrate a high level of ethical and professional integrity and promote ethical standards of practice in accordance with HIMAA Code of Ethics
- 2.6 Treat each person in a respectful fashion, being mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.
- 2.7 Ensure all voices are listened to and respected.
- 2.8 Avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with other professionals.
- 2.9 Do not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability

3. Undertake their professional duties in an ethical, efficient, legitimate, safe and responsible manner.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A7, C, D, F2

- 3.1 Act in a professional and ethical manner at all times.
- 3.2 Cooperate with lawful authorities as appropriate.
- 3.3 Be aware of the profession's mission, values, and ethical principles, and practice in a manner consistent with them by acting honestly and responsibly.
- 3.4 If conflict exists between professional standards and organisation/work demands, the conflict must be resolved to ensure practice is in accordance with professional standards.
- 3.5 To ensure compliance with the Australian Coding Standards, a professional undertaking coding duties must ensure that they thoroughly read all relevant documentation, pathology results, imaging reports, and any other tests performed that would have an impact on the episode of care. Apply all codes accordingly and if in doubt ensure a query is sent to the treating clinician for further clarification.
- 3.6 Act with integrity, behave in a trustworthy manner, elevate service to others above self-interest, and promote high standards of practice in every setting.
- 3.7 Anticipate, clarify, and avoid any conflict of interest, to all parties concerned, when dealing with consumers, consulting with competitors, in providing services requiring

potentially conflicting roles (for example, finding out information about one facility that would help a competitor), or serving the Association in a volunteer capacity. The conflicting roles or responsibilities must be clarified and appropriate action taken to minimize any conflict of interest.

3.8 Ensure that the working environment is consistent and encourages compliance with the professional practice standards taking reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the standards.

4. Not engage in (and to report) dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or other forms of illegal or unethical conduct that adversely reflect on the profession or the individual's fitness for membership in the profession.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A4, A5, A7, B, D, F2, G, H3, I2, I4

4.1 A health information management professional shall not:

4.1.1 Permit one's private conduct to interfere with the ability to fulfil one's professional responsibilities.

4.1.2 Take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further one's own personal, religious, political, or business interests.

4.2 A health information management professional shall:

4.2.1 Undertake their coding duties in accordance with the current Australian Coding Standards and within the ethical confines of this professional practice principle through:

4.2.2 Apply accurate, complete, and consistent coding practices for the production of high-quality healthcare data.

4.2.3 Report all healthcare data elements (e.g. diagnosis and procedure codes, present on admission indicator, discharge status) required for external reporting purposes (e.g. reimbursement and other administrative uses, population health, quality and patient safety measurement, and research) completely and accurately, in accordance with regulatory and documentation standards and requirements and applicable official coding conventions, rules, and guidelines.

4.2.4 Assign and report only the codes and data that are clearly and consistently supported by health record documentation in accordance with Australian Coding Standards.

4.2.5 Query provider (physician or other qualified healthcare practitioner) for clarification and additional documentation prior to code assignment when there is conflicting, incomplete, or ambiguous information in the health record regarding a significant reportable condition or procedure or other reportable data element dependent on health record documentation (e.g. present on admission indicator).

4.2.6 Refuse to change reported codes or the narratives of codes so that meanings are misrepresented.

4.2.7 Refuse to participate in or support coding or documentation practices intended to inappropriately increase payment, qualify for insurance policy coverage, or skew data by means that do not comply with federal and state statutes, regulations and official rules and guidelines.

4.2.8 Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in situations supporting proper coding practices.

4.2.9 Advance coding knowledge and practice through continuing education.

4.2.10 Refuse to participate in or conceal unethical coding or abstraction practices or procedures.

4.2.11 Protect the confidentiality of the health record at all times and refuse to access protected health information not required for coding-related activities (examples of coding-related activities include completion of code assignment, other health record data abstraction, coding audits, and educational purposes).

4.2.12 Take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they actually perform or to which they contribute. Honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others verbally or written, such as in publication.

4.2.13 Demonstrate behaviour that reflects integrity shows a commitment to ethical and legal coding practices, and fosters trust in professional activities. .4 Take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues. Be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behaviour.

4.2.14 Seek resolution if there is a belief that a colleague has acted unethically or if there is a belief of incompetence or impairment by discussing one's concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive

5. Make determinations within the professional scope of assigned responsibility and knowledge.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A6, A7

5.1 Health Information Managers and Clinical Coders, and all those eligible for membership of the Health Information Management Association of Australia will ensure they practice their profession within the limits of their skills and competencies. Practicing outside of the limits of ones skills and responsibilities will not provide a guarantee to the people or organisations we serve of a quality service and has the potential to damage the profession.

6. State truthfully and accurately any professional credentials, education and experience

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A6, A7

6.1 All members of HIMAA will clearly state, and provide documented proof of their professional credentials, education and experience within their chosen field be it health

information management, clinical coding, IT, privacy, medical transcription, or any other professional eligible for membership.

7. Discharge honourably the responsibilities of any national or branch/network association position

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7,

7.1 Essential to the success and sustainability of all HIMAA national and branch groups and committees is the commitment of members to their positions as accountable and dependable to the wider group. Members must act responsibly in their roles by maintaining the highest principles of the profession, by supporting and educating health information managers and clinical coders to meet the demands of diverse work environments with wisdom thereby displaying honour and creditability as distinguishing features of our profession.

8. Advance health information management knowledge and quality practice through continuing participation in education, research, publications, presentations and interdisciplinary collaboration.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A6, A7, E,

8.1 Health information managers and clinical coders who are HIMAA members will be committed to:

8.1.1 Acquiring further knowledge from the vast health information field through education, research, publications, and presentations and via collaboration with other health disciplines.

8.1.2 Increasing their knowledge develops judgement and advances their skills, leading to improved performance and quality practice, which is essential to the integrity of health information management within the complex health arena...

8.2 Health Information Management Professionals are encouraged to participate in professional development throughout their careers to ensure their knowledge is ever expanding allowing for increased scope in responsibilities and ongoing competency. This includes such things as professional certification through the HIMAA Professional Credentialing Scheme available to all HIMAA members.

9. Recruit and mentor students, staff, peers and colleagues to develop and strengthen the professional workforce.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A6, A7, I1

9.1 Health Information Managers and Clinical Coders, as members of HIMAA, will be committed to the advancement of the health information profession and encourage HIM / Clinical coding professionals to become members of HIMAA ensuring that a professional body is supporting current and future HIMs/Clinical Coders.

9.2 As part of this undertaking, HIMAA members commit to being available to mentor, advice and support new members, students and the health information professional during their career. Members are encouraged to be available to undertake student placements to support the education of future HIMs and Clinical Coders.

9.3 Members are encouraged to advance the profession in a positive manner by informing and educating staff, peers and colleagues as to the knowledge HIM / Clinical Coders have and the contribution HIMAA professionals make to the health industry.

10. Contribute to the planning and proactive development of services which enable individuals within the community to achieve optimum health.

HIMAA HIM Competency Domains Cross-Referenced: A1, A2, A3, A5, A7, B, F, H3, I2, I3, I4

10.1 The Health Information Manager will professionally contribute towards information management as it relates to health care service delivery, as this concept evolves and diversifies in accordance with the State Health directives, and changing community and international health needs.

10.2 Professional contribution shall consist of such things as:

10.2.1 Input into the corporate schematic design of health information workspaces as they pertain to health infrastructure,

10.2.2 Redevelopment and planning for the local population health needs from both health information and case mix perspectives, and

10.2.3 The dynamic interplay between health care service providers in both public and private health sectors.