

HIMT Essential Functions/Technical Standards

Purpose

The Health Information Management Technology (HIMT) Program, in alignment with the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) and the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), establishes the following essential functions and technical standards.

These standards ensure students develop competencies in health data management, coding, informatics, data analytics, privacy and security, and information governance required for entry-level HIMT practice, including successful completion of Professional Practice Experiences (PPE).

Students must meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, in both didactic and applied learning environments.

Communication Skills

Students must:

- Communicate clearly with faculty, peers, preceptors, and healthcare professionals
- Accurately document health information within EHR systems
- Present findings and reports appropriate to HIM functions (e.g., quality, coding, compliance)
- Maintain confidentiality of PHI in all academic and PPE settings
- Demonstrate professional communication in virtual and in-person environments

Critical Thinking

Students must:

- Apply coding and classification systems accurately (ICD, CPT, HCPCS)
- Analyze health data for quality, accuracy, and completeness
- Interpret regulatory requirements and compliance standards
- Identify and resolve discrepancies in health records
- Use data to support decision-making and performance improvement

Technology and EHR Proficiency

Students must:

- Use EHR systems and HIM technologies effectively
- Apply coding software, HIM software, and data tools
- Demonstrate data security and system navigation skills
- Adapt to evolving technologies including interoperability and health information exchange
- Troubleshoot basic technical issues

Information Processing

Students must:

- Accurately collect, manage, and validate health data

- Maintain data integrity and follow information governance practices
- Organize and analyze datasets for reporting and decision-making
- Meet productivity and timeliness expectations consistent with HIM practice

Professionalism and Ethics

Students must:

- Adhere to AHIMA Code of Ethics, AHIMA Standards of Ethical Coding and HIPAA regulations
- Maintain confidentiality and security of patient information
- Demonstrate integrity, accountability, and professional conduct
- Respect diversity and promote equitable healthcare practices
- Comply with program, institutional, and PPE site policies

Emotional and Behavioral Stability

Students must:

- Maintain professionalism in clinical and simulated environments
- Respond appropriately to feedback from faculty and preceptors
- Adapt to changing workflows and expectations
- Collaborate effectively with interdisciplinary teams
- Demonstrate reliability and sound judgment

Basic Physical Requirements

Students must:

- Sit and work at computers for extended periods
- Perform repetitive tasks such as typing and data entry
- Use standard office and HIT equipment
- Maintain visual and mental focus for detailed data work
- Communicate effectively in various environments

Professional Practice Experience (PPE) Requirements

In accordance with CAHIIM standards, students must complete Professional Practice Experiences designed to reinforce and demonstrate HIM competencies in real-world or simulated environments.

During PPE, students must be able to:

Professional Conduct in PPE Settings

- Adhere to all site-specific policies, procedures, and confidentiality agreements
- Maintain HIPAA compliance and protect all PHI
- Demonstrate professional behavior, attire (if applicable), and communication
- Exhibit punctuality, reliability, and accountability

Application of HIM Competencies

- Apply coding, data analysis, and health information management skills in practical settings
- Use EHRs and other health information systems accurately and efficiently

- Participate in workflows related to revenue cycle, release of information, data quality, or compliance
- Demonstrate understanding of information governance and data stewardship principles

Supervision and Feedback

- Work under the direction of assigned preceptors or faculty
- Accept and incorporate feedback to improve performance
- Demonstrate progress toward entry-level competency achievement

Technology and Security Compliance

- Use organizational systems appropriately and securely
- Follow access control, authentication, and data security protocols
- Report any suspected breaches or issues according to site policy

Safety and Legal Compliance

- Comply with all legal, regulatory, and accreditation requirements applicable to the PPE site
- Demonstrate awareness of workplace safety and organizational procedures

Performance Expectations

- Must complete the time log, including obtaining preceptor's signature for each session, for all hours completed (minimum of 40 hours must be completed and accounted for)
- Meet productivity, accuracy, and quality standards appropriate to assigned tasks
- Complete all PPE assignments, logs, and evaluations as required by the program
- Prepare and present a presentation detailing internship experience
- Demonstrate readiness for entry-level HIMT roles upon completion