

Profession

About RHIA's

(RHIA) Registered Health Information Administrators are skilled in the collection, interpretation, and analysis of patient data. Additionally, they assume managerial positions related to these functions. RHIA's interact with all levels of an organization—clinical financial, administrative—that employ patient data in decision making and every day operations.

RHIA's enjoy job placements in a broad range of settings that span the continuum of healthcare including hospitals, office-based physician practices, nursing homes, home health agencies, mental health facilities and public health agencies. The growth of managed care has created additional job opportunities in health maintenance organizations (HMOs), preferred provider organization (PPOs), and insurance companies.

The department of Health Information Administration offers a four-year program that leads to a Bachelor of Science degree. Students following the program may prepare for employment in hospitals, clinics, health agencies, health information systems, medical research programs or any other health related organization.

The Profession

Traditionally, the duties of the registered health information administrator (RHIA) are administrative and involve direct contact with a hospital's medical staff and administration. The RHIA manages the facility's medical record/health information services, designs the patient information systems, helps determine the flow of the medical information and decides what equipment will be purchased and how many personnel will be needed to provide the services required. The RHIA also plays an important role in quality assurance activities and contributes to the financial viability of a facility. Currently, approximately 31% of RHIA's active in the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) serve in this capacity.

Other RHIA's serve in non-traditional roles. As patient records evolve toward computerization and as more entities such as third-party payers

require sophisticated health data, RHIA's benefit from a wide-selection of jobs across the industry.

Job Outlook

The overall employment outlook for registered health information administrators (RHIA) is excellent. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of health information management professionals is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2008. Significant employment opportunities are available as well as excellent potential for professional growth. Graduates of Chicago State University Health Information Department usually find employment prior to or soon after graduation.

Salaries and Work Settings

The average starting salary for a health information administrator will vary depending on the size and geographical location of the hospital or healthcare facility and on the position. A recent Salary Survey conducted by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) reveals starting salaries from \$30,000 to \$50,000. It is possible to earn \$50,000 to \$75,000 within five years of graduation.

Health information administrators are employed in a variety of settings such as clinics, hospitals, insurance companies, nursing homes, pharmaceutical companies, consulting and law firms etc. Based on skills, education and interests, some of the positions available are:

HIM Department Director	Quality Improvement Analyst
Compliance Officer	Clinic Manager
Medical Staff Services Supervisor	HIM Home Health Coordinator
Data Quality Manager	HIM Educator/Program Director
Patient Information Coordinator	

Professional Certification

Professional certification is achieved by passing the registration examination administered by the AHIMA. Eligibility to take this exam is based on the successful completion of a baccalaureate degree program or a post-baccalaureate certificate program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) in cooperation with the Council on Accreditation (COA) of the AHIMA. The Health Information Administration Department at Chicago State University is accredited by CAAHEP in cooperation with the COA.

Chicago State University and the College of Health Sciences

Chicago State University (CSU) is a public university under the general jurisdiction of a local Board of Directors. The University is located in a residential community on the south side of Chicago. The 161-acre campus can be reached by public transportation and parking is available for student vehicles. The student body of the University is multiracial and includes part time and full time students, many of whom are older than the traditional college age. There is one student dormitory on campus. Most students are commuters.

The Health Information Administration Department is located in the Business and Health Sciences Building. It is a part of the College of Health Sciences. The College has four academic departments -- Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Health Information Administration and Health Studies. The Dean of the College of Health Sciences, Dr. Joseph Balogun, administers the College. The Department of Health Information Administration is committed to the preparation of competent professionals who possess a sense of personal, social and professional responsibility.