


	Current Number of Workers 2006	Projected Number of Workers 2016	% Change to 2016	Average Annual Openings	 Medical Records and Health Information Technicians SOC # 29-2071	
Regional	200	250	25.00%	10		
Texas	10,450	13,750	31.60%	610		
Education/ Training Time	Is License Required?	Wage Rate \$/Hr. 2008 Regionally	Percent Female	Average Age	Job Turnover	Why Most Job Openings Occur
Associates	Industry Certificate	\$14.65	91.5%	31.7	Average	Equal Growth/ Replacement

JOB DESCRIPTION

Compile, process, and maintain medical records of hospital and clinic patients in a manner consistent with medical, administrative, ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements of the health care system. Process, maintain, compile, and report patient information for health requirements and standards. *Includes Medical Coders. In the future, will include digitalization of health records.*

WHERE DO WORKERS FIND JOBS?

Offices of Physicians
 General Medical and Surgical Hospitals
 Nursing Care Facilities
 Outpatient Care Centers
 Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals
 Federal Government, Except Education
 Local Government, Except Education
 Home Health Care Services

RELATED COLLEGE PROGRAMS

CIP 510707 Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician
 CIP 510713 Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder

IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

* English Language

BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

* Clerical

* Customer and Personal Service

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

* Computers and Electronics

LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

* Law and Government

* Public Safety and Security

IMPORTANT SKILLS

COMPLEX PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

* Complex Problem Solving

CONTENT

* Active Listening

* Reading Comprehension

* Speaking

PROCESS

* Critical Thinking

* Monitoring

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

* Time Management

SOCIAL SKILLS

* Coordination

IMPORTANT ABILITIES

IDEA GENERATION AND REASONING

ABILITIES

* Information Ordering

* Problem Sensitivity

VERBAL ABILITIES

* Oral Expression

* Written Comprehension

VISUAL ABILITIES

* Near Vision

NATURE OF THE WORK: Medical Records and Health Information Technicians

Every time a patient receives health care, a record is maintained of the observations, medical or surgical interventions, and treatment outcomes. This record includes information that the patient provides concerning his or her symptoms and medical history, the results of examinations, reports of x rays and laboratory tests, diagnoses, and treatment plans. Medical records and health information technicians organize and evaluate these records for completeness and accuracy.

Technicians assemble patients' health information. They make sure that patients' initial medical charts are complete, that all forms are completed and properly identified and signed, and that all necessary information is in the computer. They regularly communicate with physicians and other health care professionals to clarify diagnoses or to obtain additional information.

Some medical records and health information technicians specialize in coding patients' medical information for insurance purposes. Technicians who specialize in coding are called health information coders, medical record coders, coder/abstractors, or coding specialists. These technicians assign a code to each diagnosis and procedure. They consult classification manuals and also rely on their knowledge of disease processes. Technicians then use computer software to assign the patient to one of several hundred "diagnosis-related groups," or DRGs. The DRG determines the amount for which the hospital will be reimbursed if the patient is covered by Medicare or other insurance programs using the DRG system. In addition to the DRG system, coders use other coding systems, such as those geared toward ambulatory settings or long-term care.

Some technicians also use computer programs to tabulate and analyze data to improve patient care, control costs, provide documentation for use in legal actions, respond to surveys, or use in research studies. For example, cancer (or tumor) registrars maintain facility, regional, and national databases of cancer patients. Registrars review patient records and pathology reports, assign codes for the diagnosis and treatment of different cancers and selected benign tumors. Registrars conduct annual followups on all patients in the registry to track their treatment, survival, and recovery. Physicians and public health organizations then use this information to calculate survivor rates and success rates of various types of treatment, locate geographic areas with high incidences of certain cancers, and identify potential participants for clinical drug trials. Cancer registry data also is used by public health officials to target areas for the allocation of resources to provide intervention and screening.

Medical records and health information technicians' duties vary with the size of the facility where they work. In large to medium-sized facilities, technicians might specialize in one aspect of health information or might supervise health information clerks and transcriptionists while a medical records and health information administrator manages the department. In small facilities, a credentialed medical records and health information technician sometimes manages the department.