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1 HIM® is a registered trademark of CHIMA
CERTIFIED HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (HIM) PROFESSIONAL

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:
The Canadian Health Information Management Association (CHIMA) was founded in 1942 to provide a forum for Health Information Management (HIM®) professionals to share their expertise. The Canadian College of Health Information Management (CCHIM) is a federally chartered national certifying body. It was formed in 1972 to provide educational standards and professional certification of the health information management professional. These bodies operate jointly, under the acronym CHIMA, to attain the following Mission, Vision and Values:

OUR VISION:
Advancing the health care system as the change leader in health information management.

OUR MISSION:
CHIMA is the national organization that represents leadership and excellence in health information management.

As a national association, we:
» Support continuing education and professional practice of HIM professionals
» Develop strategic partnerships to advance the development and integration of electronic HIM
» Advocate for and strengthen the HIM® role in health care settings across the continuum of care.

As a federally chartered college, we:
» Are the single source of credentialed Health Information Management Professionals
» Partner with educational institutions, our members, industry, and employers to develop the competencies, skills and knowledge for the HIM profession
» Provide essential research and expertise in health information management standards and best practice.

As a profession, we:
» Contribute to client care, outcomes and safety through the provision of accurate, complete, timely and accessible health information
» Support the Canadian public by advocating for and monitoring the privacy, security and confidentiality of personal health information.

VALUES
1. Learning
2. Leadership
3. Excellence
4. Integrity
5. Collaboration
EDUCATION AND REGISTRATION

Education for certified HIM professionals involves diploma, post diploma and undergraduate programs. All current CHIMA-accredited HIM programs are listed on the CHIMA website at https://www.echima.ca/recognized-him-schools.

To receive certification, HIM professionals must complete an accredited program of study and successfully complete the CHIMA national certification examination (NCE). Advanced standing opportunities are available for individuals who meet the criteria to challenge the NCE. To maintain certification, certified HIM professionals must maintain active membership and accumulate 36 continuing education credits within a three year cycle.

Mandate of CCHIM

The mandate of the CCHIM includes certification, accreditation, professional practice, professional development, and research.

Certification – CCHIM is a federally chartered college responsible for the certification of all HIM professionals in Canada. CHIMA also conducts HIM program accreditation across Canada. CHIMA accredited program graduates and individual's assessed as advanced standing graduates are eligible to challenge the CHIMA national exam. Once certified, all certified HIM professionals must accumulate 36 continuing education credits over a three year cycle and maintain CHIMA membership.

Professional competencies and professional practice – CHIMA has professional core competencies as well as specific core learning content related to these competencies (see below for listing). The profession has standards of practice and professional practice briefs as well as a Code of Ethics, guidelines to the Code of Ethics, and a Professional Ethics Committee. The professional practice briefs and Code of Ethics can be found on our website at www.echima.ca.

Education – Diploma, post diploma, and undergraduate programs are accredited. Degree and degree completion programs are available. Work is ongoing towards Masters and PhD degrees in Canada.

Professional development – Mandatory continuing education credits are required as noted below under Education and Registration. Educational development available through CHIMA includes teleconferences, webinars, online sessions, workshops, conferences and professional practice briefs.

Research – CCHIM provides essential research and expertise in health information standards and best practice. Publications include the professional practice briefs, practice guidelines, and an HIM textbook. CCHIM is leading a multidisciplinary research team working on development of the Canadian health information management lifecycle. This document is expected to be completed and published by January 2014. The document will include guidelines for use and will encompass most levels of healthcare.
How Does the Organization Define Registration & Certification?

Registration is the listing of qualified individuals on an official roster. The roster is maintained by CHIMA. Certification is the process by which CHIMA grants recognition of competence to an individual. CHIMA requires all certified HIMs to be active members. Certified members may use the professional title and credential. In professions where licensure is not required or available, such as the HIM profession (due to no direct patient “hands on” contact), it is in the interests of the public to ensure that people completing the work within a profession meet certification based on the highest standards in the areas of competency and education.

Neither licensure nor certification are a guarantee of total satisfaction or competency, however a federally chartered college monitors the core competencies and professional practice of its members. The monitoring is completed to protect public safety, information privacy and confidentiality, to support stakeholder requirements for quality health data and information.

Core Competencies

The HIM professions core competencies include:

1. Biomedical Sciences
2. Health Care System in Canada
3. Health Information
   a. Health Information Management
      i. Data Collection and Grouping
      ii. Information and Data Standards
      iii. Data Quality
      iv. Records Management
   b. Health Information Analysis and Business Intelligence
      i. Statistics
      ii. Research Design and Methodology
      iii. Epidemiology
      iv. Decision Support and Data Analytics
   c. Health Information: Privacy, Confidentiality and Access
      i. Privacy – The Legal Basis and Requirements of Accountability Including Access, Collection, Use, Disclosure, Retention and Disposal of Health Information
      ii. Management of Access, Privacy and Confidentiality Obligations in Relation to Personal Health Information
4. Information Systems and Technology
5. Management
6. Ethics and Practice
7. Practicum
HIM Curriculum

The CCHIM learning content document outlines specific requirements for curriculum content of accredited Health Information Management (HIM) professional diploma and degree programs in Canada. The required learning content represents the skills and knowledge that a HIM professional is expected to have upon entry to practice.

The required learning content addresses the increasing need for education in the electronic health record, preparation for the current trend of rationalization in health care, and an increase in presence across the continuum of health care delivery. The four domains of practice for CHIMA are 1) Privacy, 2) Data Quality and 3) Electronic Health Information Management (e-HIM™), and 4) HIM standards.

For access to the complete HIM curriculum document, please contact Paula Weisflock, Director of Education and Certification at paula.weisflock@echima.ca.

Certified HIM Professional Role Statement

_Health Information Management Professionals_ contribute to individual and global health through the creation of quality health information in partnership with other health professionals.

**Health Information Management Professionals:**

- capture and manage data to contribute directly to patient care;
- aggregate and integrate data to support planning and resource utilization;
- create and present information to initiate and support clinical, financial and management decisions in the health sector;
- conduct research to expand health knowledge at the individual, institutional and global environments;
- promote privacy, security and confidentiality of health information, whether in paper or electronic format, according to federal and provincial privacy legislation; and
- participate in the transition to the electronic health record.

_Health Information Management Professionals_ acknowledge the mutual and vested interest of the public, governments, creators of global health databases and other professional disciplines associated with both the health and information industries.

_Health Information Management Professionals_ possess a unique blend of knowledge and skills that encompasses biomedical sciences, information sciences and technology, legal aspects of health information, coding classification systems, the science of clinical and financial data integration and management. As leaders in health information management, these professionals are positioned to work in a variety of settings across the health industry.
CREDENTIAL AND PROFESSIONAL TITLE NAME CHANGE

In 2001, the Health Record Technician (HRT) and Health Record Administrator (HRA) programs were updated to reflect industry needs. Currently, graduates challenge the certificant level HIM examination. The professional title, certified HIM professional, encompasses all current CHIMA active members, both previous and recent graduates. The terms HRT, HRA, and Health Record Professional (HRP) are no longer used in regards to our professionals. The credential for certified HIM professionals is CHIM – certified in health information management.

In September 2005, CHIMA representatives attended a meeting in Ottawa with members of the Statistics Canada and Human Resource and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) team. This was a successful meeting as the HRSDC team had completed an investigation and acknowledged that HIM professionals belong in a professional National Occupation Code (NOC). As of 2006, HIM professionals have been placed in NOC 1122 - Professional Occupations in Business Services to Management with a specific HIM code of NOC - 1252 - Health information management occupations. These placements are considered temporary and our goal is to have a NOC specific to the HIM profession in a specific eHealth category.

Health care in Canada is currently undergoing significant reforms at regional, provincial, and national levels. The manner in which scarce health resources will be utilized is foremost in the minds of health care stakeholders. The Electronic Health Record (EHR) has been advanced as an innovation that will both reduce health costs and improve patient care. Numerous studies and reference papers describe the advantages of the EHR; however, little attention has been directed to assessing the human and fiscal resources necessary to implement and effectively manage the EHR. As Canadian health settings move from paper to electronic health records, the role of Health Information Management (HIM) professionals will correspondingly change to meet the demands of an increasingly digital workplace.

In 2009, the Health Informatics and Health Information Management Sector Study (O’Grady 2009) confirmed a significant skills shortage and increasing demand for HIM and health informatics (HI) professionals by 2014. Study findings suggested that HI and HIM skills deficits would significantly delay the development and implementation of the EHR in Canada. EHR implementation is inarguably a laudable policy direction; however, significant challenges will remain without a corresponding systematic effort to develop the human resources necessary to support its implementation and maintenance.

The Canadian Health Information Management Association (CHIMA) is the certifying body and national association for approximately 5000 HIM professionals across Canada. CHIMA has an essential role to play in the evolution of the HIM profession. In addition to setting and administering the HIM national certification examination through its Canadian College of Health Information Management (CCHIM), CHIMA specifies HIM training curricula, accredits HIM educational programs at colleges and universities, and provides continuing education for HIM professionals in the workplace. Accordingly, CHIMA is uniquely situated to address the evolving skills and training needs necessary to support the transition to the EHR. A coordinated strategy developed in collaboration with health stakeholders at all levels (e.g., Federal and Provincial governments, health facilities, educational institutes) is needed to identify and address the skills and training required to implement and maintain the EHR. Only then will the financial efficiencies and patient care benefits of the EHR be realized.

Profession as we transition to the EHR environment.
Workforce Transformation

In 2012, CHIMA completed two projects that examined HIM labour shortages and HIM skills upgrading necessary to support the transition to the EHR environment. The first of these initiatives, Workforce Transformation, describes skills training, new roles, and career paths for the changing HIM profession. The second initiative, Evolve the College, details proposed changes to HIM certification, specialization, and training. A report documenting the findings and recommendations of these projects was published in 2013. The report informs HIM professionals and stakeholders of the evolving roles and competencies of certified HIM professionals.

To view the complete report online please visit: https://www.echima.ca/governance/workforce-transformation

The Workforce Transformation project maps the evolution of the HIM profession into new roles in the ever-changing electronic information environment. This project was undertaken with collaboration between CHIMA and key stakeholders to characterize future roles and functions of HIM professionals. The Workforce Transformation project focused on two main areas: (i) the development of Information and Communications Technology Council eHealth competency profiles; and (ii) the definition and development of new HIM roles. These represent the future of the HIM profession as we transition to the EHR environment.

The Evolve the College project focused on the current and proposed activities of the Canadian College of Health Information Management (CCHIM). As CHIMA’s federally chartered college, CCHIM is responsible for HIM certification and accreditation of HIM education programs across Canada. Candidates who pass the National Certification Examination receive the credential (CHIM) and designation of Certified HIM professional. An advisory committee was struck to envision the future and develop the report. The committee’s work had two phases: (i) an environmental scan, and (ii) the development of recommendations. Overall objectives of the Evolve the College project were to foster and strengthen strategic alliances, specify future certification requirements, and identify the need and opportunity for specialization(s). In conclusion, the rapidly changing health information environment will require HIM professionals with the education and skills necessary to both implement and manage the EHR. This report provides a summary outline of a strategic plan to educate and prepare HIM professionals for this future. We invite you to join us as we map the way forward.