The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) has developed a new tool for students to learn more about career options and to see pathways of advancement into other positions. According to the AHIMA HIM Career Map FAQ page, “The HIM Career Map is an interactive and visual representation of the job titles and roles that make up the scope of HIM and the career pathways associated with them.”

http://hicareers.com/CareerMap/

One of the major benefits of the Health Information Management field is that there are so many different career avenues available. The HIM Career Map gives you a framework to think about those possibilities. Jobs are divided into six broad categories: 1) Compliance/Risk Management; 2) Education/Communication; 3) Informatics/Data Analysis; 4) IT/Infrastructure; 5) Operations Medical Records Administration; and 6) Revenue Cycle Management Coding & Billing. Jobs are also classified as to whether they are entry level, mid-level, advanced, or master-level. The HIM Career Map also has designated 'Emerging' jobs to explore.

Spend some time exploring this matrix. Ask yourself this... Is your current educational plan leading you toward your desired career path?
So, I completed my required hours in the hospital gift shop and finally had a choice on where I wanted to go. I’ve been curious about CIM so I decided to check out Cancer Data Services (CDS). It started out pretty boring, stuffing envelopes and updating a very long patient follow-up list, but as I started talking to people in the department it quickly got more interesting. Turns out two of my co-workers are SBCC CIM students and the other three have been CTRs for years, jackpot! Everyone has been welcoming, helpful, and most importantly, willing to answer questions and show me the ropes. I also decided to volunteer a second day in the Cancer Center. Direct patient care probably won’t be an element of my eventual career but I thought it would be good to experience the treatment side of CIM. My assignments at the center have allowed me to work in the pharmacy, registration, scheduling for one of the doctors, and it’s been quite a workout because I literally walk miles escorting patients and running errands.

Before starting in CDS I’d heard some of the CIM terminology but had no idea what it was all about. During the past two months my co-workers have described the daily responsibilities of their jobs and what they like or find challenging, and how they’ve gotten to where they are in the field. They’ve shown me what case finding and abstracting look like and explained how they gather required information. I recently met with my department manager to discuss the role of cancer information reporting and management in the hospital and at both state and federal levels, and was able to pick her brain regarding career opportunities and my educational choices. And my experience working with patients has been a powerful reminder that there are real people behind the charts and statistics, something I hope to always keep in mind.

I’ve almost finished my 200-hour commitment (over six months) at the hospital and am not sure if I’ll continue where I am or try something new. Volunteering has been an invaluable experience for me however and I’m excited to say I’ve decided to double in HIT and CIM, which has turned out to be far more intriguing than I ever imagined. I can’t think of any other way I could have gained such a wealth of experience and knowledge, nor met and learned so much from so many interesting people. If you have the time I highly recommend it!

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation’s compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another. ~Erma Bombeck
Pitching HIT

By Anthony Pineda

My enthusiasm for all things related to health information technology (HIT) has continued to grow with every class that I have taken. Whenever I see an opportunity to convey the benefits of HIT, I begin the conversation by encouraging people to get into the habit of being their own best advocate and to begin taking responsibility for their own healthcare, especially chronically ill individuals. Grist to start the conversation is all you need to encourage people to think about important things like advance directives or security and privacy (and the difference between the two). If you are new to the HIT world and still grasping the concepts of how and where you might fit in, you can always pitch the personal health record (PHR).

I have been a PHR junkie since the first day I heard about it. Creating my own PHR was actually a semester long project that I had to complete for one of my classes. The PHR is one of those topics that do not require too much explanation because almost everyone has seen a doctor at least once. Interestingly, most people are not that motivated to create a PHR because they rely on doctors or providers and assume the information will be made available should they ever need it. The work involved to initially create a PHR turns people off (in my opinion). At first, this response was discouraging because I expected people to react with the same exuberance, as I. Now, I usually listen to the dialogue between people discussing healthcare (HIT, EHR, etc.) and join the conversation when I see a way to use HIT to help resolve whatever the discussion may be (e.g., conversion of paper medical records to electronic medical records (EHR), continuity of care, meaningful use). Join or begin the discussion to pitch HIT as a solution to address the concerns people may have. Furthermore, arm yourself with proof or examples so that you are credible. For example, when discussing the benefits of HIT, you can use assessments conducted by research companies or reference laws.

Lesson learned: Do not shove HIT down people’s throats because you may come across like a used car salesperson. It is more useful for people to view you/us as resources of information for people to utilize in their own time. In general, people are overwhelmed by healthcare and do not understand how it all works. Understandably, the attitudes and opinions we cling to are formed by our personal experiences within the healthcare system. These mindsets may have been formed because a loved one died or because of illness. Regardless, as future health information professionals we have certain obligations that should always remain paramount. Succinctly, these obligations include providing service to those who seek access to patient information; protecting both medical and social information; protecting confidential information; preserving and securing health information; and promoting the quality and advancement of healthcare.

To create your own PHR or find out more information go to [http://www.myphr.com](http://www.myphr.com).
Tools for Cancer Coding
By Gagandeep Bal

Students studying cancer coding and abstracting depend on anatomy reference guides in order to understand how cancer progresses within an organ; additionally, anatomical diagrams and illustrations are required to visualize the different stages of cancer. While taking various cancer information management (CIM) classes, I have discovered several sources for anatomical references and illustrations. For example, the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) Visuals Online website provides and arrangement of illustrations and photographs that are both meaningful and useful. The NCI Visuals Online is also one of the best cancer coding tools!

http://visualsonline.cancer.gov/

The Online Visuals website has a “browse” function that allows you to search any topic available in the database. The topic searches can be further refined by selecting the anatomy and the cancer type. Another great feature is the ability to view an array of illustrations and diagrams about the different types of cancers in different organs. The illustrations and photographs are sorted by the cancer type and cancer stage with detailed explanations in English and Spanish. By enlarging the small illustration thumbnails, you are able to view a short description about the cancer type, progress, and stage. Many of the diagrams and illustrations are copyright free; however, instructions on how to obtain permission to reuse images that are copyright protected, restricted, or that require citation are available.

Join/Renew today to stay active in our membership database. The HCSPC membership year runs on a calendar year basis. If you haven’t already done so, make sure to fill out our online membership form. It is important that we have your current contact information so that you continue to receive the HCSPC monthly newsletter.

Access the membership form by clicking here or visiting our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/hcspc2011 (don’t forget to “like” us).
Help the ONC Spread the News

By Anthony Pineda

In the June 2012 HCSPC Newsletter, we provided a link to “PLEDGE” to empower individuals to pledge to be partners in their health through Health IT. Did you pledge? I did. The Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) specifically to help convey the benefits of HIT created the Office of Consumer eHealth. The newly created department is providing ways to help consumers understand how the widespread adoption of the electronic health record (EHR) and health information technology (HIT) is giving our healthcare system a “21st century upgrade.” For example, a new, animated video: “Health IT for You” has been created to learn more about the benefits of HIT and other consumer e-health tools and the value of having secure, electronic access to your health information. When all of your providers are on the same page, you get the best care.

The Office of Consumer eHealth is providing ways for everyone to be a part of this massive movement. You can and should (as HIT students) embed the video into your own websites or social media pages, link to the video directly on HealthIT.gov, include a link to the video in your communications, and refer others to the video to spread the word. You do not have worry about distribution laws or copyright protection because permission has been granted to freely distribute the video.

A "What's In Your Health Record Video Contest??” with cash prizes will be awarded to people who ask their health care provider for access to their medical records and create a video reporting what was learned in the record. Video submissions are being accepted until August 20, 2012. Tick Tock. For more information, visit http://yourrecord.challenge.gov.
ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS

By Gagan Bal

The Santa Barbara City College HIT/CIM Student Peer Club (HCSPC) is always seeking highly motivated students who are looking to complement their educational experience and help other students in the process. If you would like to become involved in the development, management, and administration of the HCSPC, you should consider becoming a part of our Club Advisory Committee.

We need enthusiastic and committed HIT/CIM and Medical Coding students to volunteer their time to accomplish club tasks. If you are interested in joining our Advisory Committee and would like to meet and get to know your peers, please contact me at sbcc.hcspc@gmail.com. Please include a short sentence about why you would like to join our team.

DISCUSS ANYTHING FROM ANYWHERE IN OUR

HCSPC Google Group

Access Google Groups on your Android™ or Apple® iOS device by pointing your mobile browser to: https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups&hl=en#! or send the group an email at sbccs-hit-cim-student-peer-club-hcspc@googlegroups.com. Please feel free to post any questions or comments about HIT/CIM here. Please be sure to read the group rules before posting.

Information about ICD-10 is here!

By Gagan Bal

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HCSPC Google Group

Access Google Groups on your Android™ or Apple® iOS device by pointing your mobile browser to: https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups&hl=en#! or send the group an email at sbccs-hit-cim-student-peer-club-hcspc@googlegroups.com. Please feel free to post any questions or comments about HIT/CIM here. Please be sure to read the group rules before posting.

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