

CAREER OUTLOOK

Employment opportunities for health unit coordinators are expected to expand rapidly over the next decade. There is expected to be an increase of over 25% in the number of positions for health unit coordinators through the year 2010. This growth is primarily due to overall growth in all health related professions. As the population gets increasingly older, the need for unit coordinators will be enhanced because of the need for efficiency and cost effectiveness in hospitals and clinics. Many other health care facilities such as health maintenance organizations, nursing homes, and home health agencies will also be utilizing health unit coordinators because of the need to keep accurate and secure medical records.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

National Association of Health Unit
Coordinators
1947 Madron Road
Rockford, IL 61107
Phone: (888) 22-NAHUC
Web: www.nahuc.org

American Health Information Management
Association
919 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60611-1683
Phone: (312) 787-2672
Web: www.ahima.org

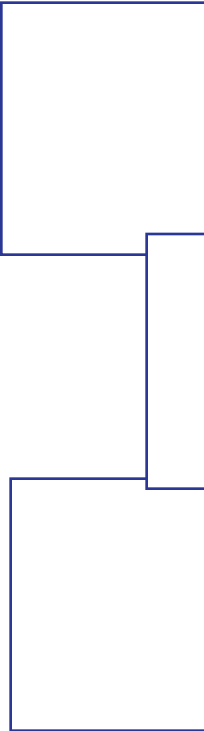


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POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Health Unit Coordinators are members of the supporting cast that helps maintain a health care facility's service and performance. These trained individuals may also be known as unit clerks, ward clerks, or unit secretaries. Some of their daily operations include preparing special documents such as birth/death certificates, maintaining patient charts and records, coordinating patient activities for the unit, ordering supplies, and communicating with the dietary department. They may also perform other duties such as graphing the temperature, pulse, and blood pressure readings for patients, as well as transcribing medical orders and completing admission and discharge forms. Health unit coordinators usually work under the supervision of the registered nursing staff or the health information administrator. One of their main responsibilities is to act as a liaison between the patients and staff. They must have excellent communication skills in order to serve as this vital link between the physicians, nursing staff, various departments, patients, and visitors. Since these unit coordinators may serve as receptionists on patient floors, they must possess a pleasant and professional disposition in dealing with the public. Anyone interested in this health related profession should pay close attention to detail, be reliable and dependable, and have the ability to follow instructions and procedures.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Health unit coordinators work in a variety of health care settings such as hospitals, clinics, public health care agencies, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), nursing homes, home health agencies, and government agencies. Working conditions vary greatly with hours ranging from full-time to part-time.

HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Individuals interested in a career as a health unit coordinator should take high school courses in algebra, biology, chemistry, computer skills, data processing, psychology, English, composition, social studies, literature, foreign language, sociology, and health occupations/medical professions education.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Individuals entering a health unit coordinator program should have a high school diploma or equivalent. Community colleges and vocational-technical schools may offer programs or training through continuing education departments. Some hospitals and other health care facilities may offer on-the-job training for this position. The majority of employers require formal training or previous experience as a health unit coordinator.

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910 Hwy. 19
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