

## Executive Summary

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), a community of professionals engaged in health information management, providing support to members and strengthening the industry and profession, commissioned the Certified Coding Associate (CCA) Job Analysis from Thomson Prometric.

A job analysis is designed to obtain descriptive information about the tasks performed in a job and the knowledge needed to adequately perform those tasks. The purpose of the CCA job analysis was to:

- develop and validate the listing of the tasks and knowledge related to work performed by CCAs;
- develop test specifications for the CCA Certification Examination;
- obtain useful information that can guide professional development initiatives for CCAs; and,
- ensure that AHIMA has up-to-date information about expected changes in the CCA job role over the next few years.

### **Conduct of the Job Analysis.**

The job analysis consisted of several activities: survey development; survey dissemination; compilation of survey results; and, test specifications development. The successful outcome of the job analysis was dependent on the excellent information provided by CCA professionals throughout the study.

### **Survey Development.**

Survey research is an efficient and effective way to identify the tasks and knowledge that are important to the work performed by large numbers of CCAs. The 31 task and 87 knowledge statements included on the survey covered the following domains:

1. Health Records and Data Content
2. Health Information Requirements and Standards
3. Clinical Classification Systems
4. Reimbursement Methodologies
5. Information and Communication Technologies
6. Privacy, Confidentiality, Legal and Ethical Issues

The development of the survey was based on information from a number of sources:

- AHIMA served as the primary resource for developing a preliminary listing of competency statements.
- A Task Force Committee comprised of CCAs reviewed and revised: 1) the preliminary list of tasks and knowledge and 2) the first draft of the CCA survey.
- CCAs reviewed a pilot version of the survey to ensure that the instrument was clearly written and comprehensive in content.

### **Survey Content.**

The survey consisted of five sections: Section 1, Background and General Information; Section 2, Tasks; Section 3, Knowledge; Section 4, Recommendations for Test Content; and Section 5, Comments.

### **Dissemination of the CCA Survey.**

Thomson Prometric staff produced a Web-based survey that AHIMA disseminated in May 2005 by e-mail to 1,076 CCAs. Participants were offered two continuing education credits (CEU) for submitting a completed survey.

### **Results.**

#### **Survey Response Rate.**

A total of 275 CCAs or 25.56% of CCAs who received invitations participated in the survey. The response rate was satisfactory. Based on the analysis of survey responses, a representative group of CCAs completed the survey in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements for statistical analysis of the results.

#### **Profile of the Survey Respondents.**

The majority of respondents are female (93.50%) and have completed an HIM Coding Certificate Program (37.50%) or hold an Associate's Degree (24.00%). The largest number of respondents reported their primary work setting as Hospital (48.70%) and Medical Group Practice/Physician's office (13.10%). All respondents earned the CCA very recently since the program only began in 2002.

#### **Survey Ratings.**

Participants were asked to rate each task by answering the following question, "How important is competent performance of the task in your current position?" They were asked to rate each

knowledge statement by answering the following question, "How important is the knowledge for competent performance in your current position?" Importance ratings were provided along a five-point continuum ranging from "of no importance" to "very important". The majority of tasks and knowledge statements were rated as "moderately important," "important" or "very important."

### ***Content Coverage.***

Evidence was provided in this job analysis on the comprehensiveness of the content coverage within the domains. If the tasks and knowledge within a domain are adequately defined, then it should be judged as being well covered. Respondents indicated that the content was well covered, thus supporting the comprehensiveness of the defined domains.

### ***Write in Comments.***

Survey respondents answered two open-ended questions about their professional development needs and expected changes in their work role as a CCA.

### ***Test Specifications Development.***

In August 2005, a Test Specifications Committee was convened to review the job analysis findings and create the test content outline that will guide the development of future versions of the CCA Certification Examination.

### ***Summary.***

In summary, this study took a multi-method approach to identifying the tasks and knowledge that are important to the competent performance of CCAs. The job analysis process allowed for input from a representative group of CCAs and was conducted within the guidelines of professionally sound practice.

The results of the job analysis can be used by AHIMA to develop new versions of the CCA Certification Examination and guide professional development initiatives.