



Spring 4-22-2020

## Health Information Management Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

Danielle Sager  
*University of Tennessee Health Science Center*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.uthsc.edu/hiimappliedresearch>



Part of the [Health and Medical Administration Commons](#), [Health Information Technology Commons](#), and the [Other Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Sager, Danielle, "Health Information Management Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary" (2020). *Applied Research Projects*. 69. . <https://doi.org/10.21007/chp.hiim.0067>  
<https://dc.uthsc.edu/hiimappliedresearch/69>

This Research Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Health Informatics and Information Management at UTHSC Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Applied Research Projects by an authorized administrator of UTHSC Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [jwelch30@uthsc.edu](mailto:jwelch30@uthsc.edu).

HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

Health Information Management Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary  
Danielle Sager, MPH  
UTHSC MHIIM Program Thesis  
13 April 2020

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

### Introduction

Health information management is an engaging and dynamic occupational field that employs thousands of individuals throughout the United States across the spectrum of health care providing organizations. The ability to navigate these opportunities is influenced heavily by the location of available positions and the skillsets desired by employers. Through study of workforce development data and research in health information management one is able to determine the location and skillset of positions that will help distinguish oneself in a competitive marketplace that values not only education and experience, but the ability to lead in a field that is rapidly changing and growing as the health care industry responds to a consumer that is empowered in their own health and demands more of the industry as a whole.

### Methods

The study was conducted querying scholarly and industry-related articles focused on workforce development research. Two SQL statements were executed and returned data on job title, salary, location, skills, work experience, and positions available. Research of qualitative and quantitative data was conducted in the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), UTHSC Library, O\*NET Online, and AHIMA. The search terms included; health information management, health information management career, and workforce. The search returned 2 BLS reports, 15 UTHSC Library articles of which two are referenced, 1 O\*NET Online report, and 5 Perspectives AHIMA articles.

# HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

## Findings

Current research has found that there is a direct correlation between health information management careers and salary when considering location and desired skillsets from employers. The results show that health information management as a field is very promising in terms of job availability, salary potential, location of position, industry growth, and opportunities for advancement.

### Query 1-Simply Hired HIIM (40 of 250 rows shown)

```
select title, reg, state_abr, company, avg(salarymin), reg_type
from simplyhired_hiim
inner join simplyhired_regs using (jobkey)
where lower (title) like 'health information%'
and reg_type='Skills'
group by title, reg, state_abr, company, reg_type
order by 2 asc
```

TITLE	REG	REG_TYPE	STATE_ABR	COMPANY	AVGSALARYMIN
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	Early Childhood Education	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	Supervising Experience	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	EMR Systems	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	RHIT	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	Project Management	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	RHIA	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Officer (HEALTH INFORMATICS)	Management Experience	Skills	MI	City of Detroit	100000
Health Information Director (Acute Care Experience Only)	Leadership Experience	Skills	WY	CRJ Search	70000
Health Information Director (Acute Care Experience Only)	Transcription	Skills	WY	CRJ Search	70000

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

<b>Health Information Director (Acute Care Experience Only)</b>	Project Management	Skills	WY	CRJ Search	70000
<b>Health Information Director (Acute Care Experience Only)</b>	RHIA	Skills	WY	CRJ Search	70000
<b>Health Information Director (Acute Care Experience Only)</b>	RHIT	Skills	WY	CRJ Search	70000
<b>Health Information Integrity Specialist</b>	Medical Coding Certification	Skills	IA	UnityPoint Health	64000
<b>Health Information Integrity Specialist</b>	Medical Terminology	Skills	IA	UnityPoint Health	64000
<b>Health Information Integrity Specialist</b>	RHIA	Skills	IA	UnityPoint Health	64000
<b>Health Information Integrity Specialist</b>	ICD-10	Skills	IA	UnityPoint Health	64000
<b>Health Information Integrity Specialist</b>	AHIMA	Skills	IA	UnityPoint Health	64000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT HIM DIRECTOR (RHIA / RHIT)</b>	RHIA	Skills	IN	AMG Specialty Hospital	61000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT HIM DIRECTOR (RHIA / RHIT)</b>	Basic Computer Skills	Skills	IN	AMG Specialty Hospital	61000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT HIM DIRECTOR (RHIA / RHIT)</b>	RHIT	Skills	IN	AMG Specialty Hospital	61000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION CODING SUPERVISOR- HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	Supervising Experience	Skills	IL	Cook County Health & Hospitals System	60000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION CODING SUPERVISOR- HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	RHIT	Skills	IL	Cook County Health & Hospitals System	60000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION CODING SUPERVISOR- HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	Medical Coding Certification	Skills	IL	Cook County Health & Hospitals System	60000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION CODING SUPERVISOR- HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	CPT Coding	Skills	IL	Cook County Health & Hospitals System	60000
<b>HEALTH INFORMATION CODING SUPERVISOR- HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b>	RHIA	Skills	IL	Cook County Health & Hospitals System	60000
<b>Health Information / Credentialing Manager</b>	RHIA	Skills	NJ	Select Specialty Hospital	59000
<b>Health Information / Credentialing Manager</b>	Transcription	Skills	NJ	Select Specialty Hospital	59000
<b>Health Information / Credentialing Manager</b>	RHIT	Skills	NJ	Select Specialty Hospital	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Microsoft Word	Skills	MD	CSRA	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Tableau	Skills	MD	CSRA	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Excel	Skills	MD	CSRA	59000
<b>Health Information / Credentialing Manager</b>	Medical Terminology	Skills	NJ	Select Specialty Hospital	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Digital Marketing	Skills	MD	CSRA	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Microsoft Office	Skills	MD	CSRA	59000

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

<b>Health Information / Credentialing Manager</b>	Employee Evaluation	Skills	NJ	Select Specialty Hospital	59000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Microsoft Word	Skills	MD	General Dynamics Information Technology	57000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Tableau	Skills	MD	General Dynamics Information Technology	57000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Digital Marketing	Skills	MD	General Dynamics Information Technology	57000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Excel	Skills	MD	General Dynamics Information Technology	57000
<b>Health Information Specialist</b>	Microsoft Powerpoint	Skills	MD	General Dynamics Information Technology	57000
<b>Health Information Clerk/Medical Assistant</b>	Microsoft Office	Skills	FL	Lado Healing Institute	0
<b>Health Information Analyst - McKay Dee Hospital</b>	Hospital Experience	Skills	UT	R1 RCM	0

### Query 1-

Skillset: Simply Hired HIIM returned 250 health information management positions (40 shown) that ranged in salary from the highest minimum average of \$100,000 for Health Information Officers (Health Informatics) with the city of Detroit Michigan to the lowest minimum average of \$2,700 for a Transcriptionist at the University of Washington in Seattle Washington. Higher salaries were equated with more advanced skillsets to include professional certifications such as the RHIA and RHIT, as well as leadership and management skills. Lower salaries were equated with lower skill and educational levels. Other desirable skills include the ability to operate Microsoft Office Suite applications such as Excel and Power Point, the operation of data visualization software such as Tableau, and coding and transcription.

Location: According to the query the highest paid health information management positions were located in the states of Michigan, Wyoming, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and along the Eastern seaboard in states like New Jersey and Maryland. The positions were housed across the range of

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

organizations from hospital systems to corporations to city and county government. In all, the query showed that individuals who possess the desired skills and professional certification have the opportunity to earn a competitive salary and advance in the industry no matter the location.

### Query 2-AHIMA Careers (6 of 6 rows shown)

```
select title, skills, training, work_exp, nvl(positions, 0) positions
```

```
from ahima_careers
```

```
left join (
```

```
select title, count(*) AS positions
```

```
from simplyhired_hiim
```

```
where lower(title) like '%health information%'
```

```
group by title) hiim using (title)
```

```
where lower(title) like '%health information%'
```

TITLE	SKILLS	TRAINING	WORK_EXP	POSITIONS
<b>Health Information Technician</b>	High School Diploma or GED equivalent required, plus the equivalent of 1 yr. of college, formalized medical record technician training, or previous experience in a medical record position; RHIA, RHIT, CCS, CCS-P.	One year of experience in health information or related activities involving use of computer and familiarity with health information forms		12
<b>Project Manager of Health Information Exchange (HIE)</b>	Bachelor's degree in Business or Public Administration, Health Informatics, Healthcare or a related field; PMP Required; RHIA certification preferred	Five years or more of progressive work experience in the implementation and management of information technology projects		0
<b>Integration Analyst, Health Information Exchange</b>	Associate's degree in health information management, health care or related field; Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience preferred; RHIT or RHIA certification preferred	Three to five years or more of progressive work experience in Health Information Management or Health Information Technology is required		0
<b>Director of Health Information Exchange (HIE)</b>	Bachelor's degree in HIM or other health related field; A Master's degree in Health Administration is preferred; RHIA or RHIT, or comparable experience required	Five years of prior work experience required in the implementation and management of information technology projects; Prior leadership experience preferred		0
<b>Senior Director/ Chief Health Information Management and Exchange Officer</b>	Master's or advanced degree; RHIA or RHIT or comparable experience	Minimum of ten years experience in project and program management, with at least seven years experience managing a large, complex program(s); Minimum of ten years working with information systems implementations; Healthcare system implementations experience is strongly preferred		0

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

<b>Enterprise Master Patient Index Health Information Exchange (EMPI - HIE) Coordinator</b>	Associate's degree in Health Information Management, healthcare or a related field; Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience preferred; RHIT or RHIA certification preferred	Five years or more of progressive work experience in health information management; Experience with management of patient identity and content of the medical record; Experience or knowledge of various Health IT systems and how the workflow crosses into the medical record; Understanding or knowledge of the MPI (Master Patient Index) process; Demonstrated experience in managing multiple projects effectively; Knowledge of best practices and how own area integrates with others; Demonstrated awareness of the industry, including regulatory, evolving customer demands, and the factors that differentiate the organization in the market		0
---	--	---	--	---

### Query 2-

Education: AHIMA Careers returned only 6 positions that contained the term “health information.” Of the 6, five of the positions required some level of college education, with a Master’s or advanced degree, as well as professional certification such as the RHIA and RHIT, required for both Director level positions. On average, the positions returned required at least 5 years of progressive experience in health information management and/or information technology.

Skillset: Although not all positions require a college degree, they do all require professional certification which is an indication of the level of expertise required as a health information management professional. The information returned aligns with the former query results showing a high emphasis on skillset and professional certification as the minimum criteria necessary for upper level health information management careers.

### Discussion

Across all industries the management of protected health information is a top priority and as such, employment in this field for even early career professionals such as Health Information Technicians is “projected to grow 18 percent from 2018 to 2028, faster than the average for all



## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

occupations” (BLS, 2020). Between 2014 and 2024 1 in 4 jobs added to the economy is expected to be in the health care industry (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). Further the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that by 2028 13.8% of all jobs in the United States will be in the Healthcare and Social Assistance industry sector (BLS, 2020). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that the Medical Records and Health Information Technicians with a median pay in 2018 of \$40,350, as well as the Medical and Health Services Managers positions with a 2018 median pay of \$99,730 make up almost 1 million of today’s workforce and this is expected to grow with the adoption of EHRs. These numbers speak directly to the need for a qualified and ready workforce. In response to this expected growth throughout the industry, individuals seeking to gain employment in the sector should reflect the desired qualifications of the health information management occupational field. According to the Health Information Management Competency Model (2018) there are 5 tiers of competencies; personal effectiveness, academic, workplace, industry-wide technical, and industry sector technical that characterize the skillsets that are desired by employers (see Fig.1).

# HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

Health Information Management Competency Model

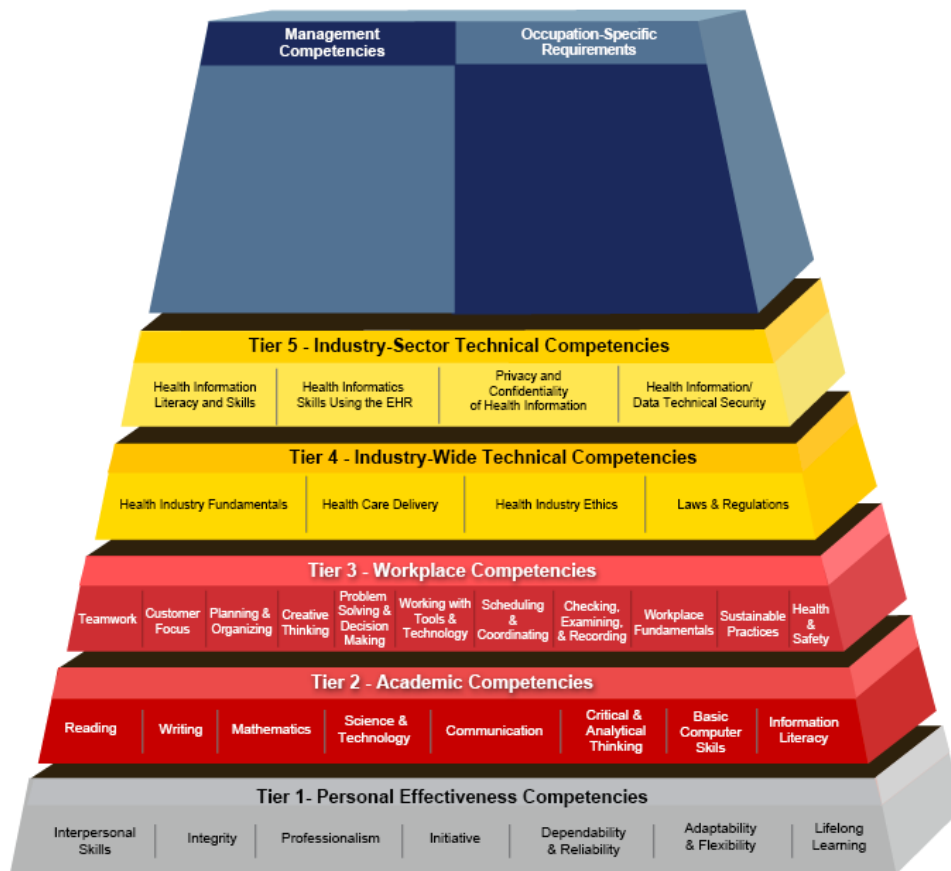


Fig.1

O\*NET’s summary report for Medical Records and Health Information Technicians (2019) follows what employers are looking for in candidates for employment in health information management; technological skills such as business analysis, health care coding, and data analytics, knowledge of health care policies and regulations, and critical thinking, judgement and decision-making. A query of one of the more well known job search sites, Indeed.com, using the term “health information management” returned 299,348 jobs with the term represented in either the title or job description. The majority of these positions were considered to be mid-level

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

(49,090) meaning that those applying need to have a more experienced background and skillset in health information management. Just like the information returned in the workforce development data, the positions were spread across a variety of occupational industries with all levels of government represented as well. In the Indeed.com query most returned job results were located in major metropolitan cities such as; Washington DC (3,527), New York City (3,249), Chicago (2,110), San Francisco (1,724), Seattle (1,292), and Houston (1,170) with few exceptions, and higher salaries were associated with higher skill and educational levels as well. Searching “health information management” on LinkedIn.com returned 58,353 jobs with the majority of those positions being considered entry level (23,461) and once again being located in mostly major metropolitan areas; New York City (1,042), San Francisco (963), Washington DC (916), Philadelphia (785), and Chicago (751). Glassdoor.com query results fell somewhat similarly to both the Indeed.com and LinkedIn.com results. 6,219 jobs were returned using the search term “health information management” with the majority of these positions being considered mid-senior level (828). These openings were also located in metropolitan areas such as; New York City (85), Chicago (74), Houston and Phoenix (73), and Dallas (65).

With the expected job growth in this industry it is vital that those wishing to enter prepare themselves through means of education, certification, and on the job experience. Individuals who are able to demonstrate their competency and knowledge of health information management best practices will be presented with increased and better opportunities for career advancement. “As the healthcare industry matures, increasing numbers of professionals are seeking certification to further demonstrate their competence” (McCormick et. Al, 2017) and “HIM-related careers are moving toward more advanced positions, including those that require mid-level, advanced, and master skills with a baccalaureate or master’s degree” (Marc et. Al, 2017).

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

In response to these requirements, there are ample opportunities for individuals entering the health information management industry to shape the industry and lead it into the future.

Individuals can position themselves for advanced careers in health information management by obtaining the education and skills both the workforce development data and the research has shown to meet the industry need. According to the AHIMA US Salary Survey Report: HIM Professionals in 2019, the more experienced you are and the more professional certifications you hold, the more likely it is that you will not only advance in your career, but will also enjoy higher salaries as compared to your peers. Credentials reflect advanced skillsets. AHIMA reports that as the number of credentials an individual obtains increases, so to, does their salary with those having obtained 1 professional credential having an average salary of \$75,540 and those having obtained 4 or more professional credentials having an average salary of \$113,950. The type of credential also influences salary with the RHIA, RHIT, CDIP, and CCS considered the most lucrative in terms of more immediate earnings increase once obtained. AHIMA further delineates salary along experience level and job setting with entry level positions making an average salary of \$63,890 and director level positions making an average of \$100,620. Further, AHIMA reports that the top 3 skillsets respondents to their survey said were most important for promotion were professional experience, education level, and certification level. Once again, falling in line with the current research discussed. With this in mind individuals interested in a career in health information management should use the information discussed in this paper to prepare themselves to meet the needs of employers. Finally, while there is limited research on how location impacts health information management careers one can get a glimpse of how salary differs across the country. AHIMA US Salary Survey Report: HIM Professionals in 2019 reports an average salary for the following geographic regions; WA, OR, CA \$87,680, AZ, CO, ID,

## HIM Careers: The Importance of Skillset and Location on Salary

MT, NM, NV, UT, WY \$76,670, ND, SD, MN, IA, KS, MO, NE \$71, 220, AR, LA, OK, TX \$78,090, IL, IN, MI, OH, WI \$72,400, MS, KY, AL, TN \$69,940, NY, NJ, PA \$83,120, DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV \$78,170, and CT, NH, RI, VT, MA, ME \$84,410. This equates to a national average salary of \$77,966 for health information management professionals. To compare, the average national salary for full time employees in 2019 age 25-34 was \$42,048 and for age 35-44 was \$50,256 (BLS, 2020). As you can see health information management as a profession has a higher average salary across all geographic regions of the US in comparison to the national average salary.

### Conclusion

As shown, there is an increased correlation between education, experience, and skill set in determining career advancement and salary potential in health information management. Although research is limited on how location impacts salary one can infer from this paper that metropolitan areas and the coastal US offer higher salaries to those with the right skillset, experience, and education. One can infer from the data that any individual seeking a successful career in health information management attain a university level degree, professional credential, and on the job experience. In closing, the research shows that health information management is a growing occupational field and that individuals meeting the industry need are in high demand and have ample opportunity to enter and thrive in the sector.

### References

1. 29-2071.00 - Medical Records and Health Information Technicians. (2019, Dec 12). Retrieved Feb 15, 2020, from <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2071.00>
2. AHIMA Career Map. (2020). Retrieved Feb 15, 2020, from <https://my.ahima.org/careermap>
3. Bates, Mari; Black, Clarence; Blair, Franchesica; Davis, Laquanda; Ingram, Steven; Lane, DaQuandra; McElderry, Alicia RHIA; Peagler, Bianca; Pickett, Jamie; Plettenburg, Cheryl EdD, RHIA, FAHIMA; Hart-Hester, Susan PhD, RHIA. "Perceptions of Health Information Management Educational and Practice Experiences." *Perspective in Health Information Management* (Summer 2014): 1-12.
4. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *The Economics Daily*, Median weekly earnings of full-time workers increased 4.0 percent in 2019. Retrieved April 13, 2020 from <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2020/median-weekly-earnings-of-full-time-workers-increased-4-point-0-percent-in-2019.htm>
5. Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. (2019, January 18). Retrieved May 4, 2019, from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>
6. Health information management jobs. (2020, Feb 15). Retrieved Feb 15, 2020, from <https://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=health+information+management&l=>
7. Jackson, Kathryn; Lower, Christi L. MS, RHIA; Rudman, William J., PhD, RHIA. "The Crossroads between Workforce and Education." *Perspective in Health Information Management* (Summer 2016): 1-11.
8. Marc, David; Robertson, Janet; Gordon, Leslie; Green-Lawson, Zakevia D; Gibbs, David; Dover, Kayce; Dougherty, Michelle. "What the Data Say About HIM Professional Trends" *Journal of AHIMA* 88, no.5 (May 2017): 24-31.
9. McCormick, K., Gugerty, B. & Sensmeier, J. (Feb, 2017). A Comparison of Professional Informatics-Related Competencies and Certifications. *Online Journal of Nursing Informatics (OJNI)*, 21( 1), Available at <http://www.himss.org/ojni>
10. Medical Records and Health Information Technicians : Occupational Outlook Handbook:. (2019, Jan 27). Retrieved Jan 27, 2020, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm>
11. Salary Snapshot: HIM Professionals. (2019). AHIMA [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://bok.ahima.org/PdfView?oid=302851>
12. Thinking About a New Job? Try Health Care. (2016, March 17). Retrieved May 4, 2019, from <https://blog.dol.gov/2016/03/17/thinking-about-a-new-job-try-health-care>
13. Watzlaf, Valerie J. M. PhD, RHIA, FAHIMA; Rudman, William J. PhD; Hart-Hester, Susan PhD; Ren, Ping. The Progression of the Roles and Functions of HIM Professionals: A Look into the Past, Present, and Future. *Perspectives in Health Information Management* (Summer 2009): 6.
14. William Rudman, PhD, RHIA; Susan Hart-Hester, PhD, RHIA; John Richey, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA; Kathryn Jackson, RHIA. "Hiring for Competency: Hiring to Not Fail vs. Hiring to Succeed." *Perspectives in Health Information Management* (Summer 2016): 1-6.
15. Zeng, Xiaoming MD, PhD; Reynolds, Rebecca, EdD, RHIA; Sharp, Marcia, MBA, RHIA. Redefining the Roles of Health Information Management Professionals in Health Information Technology. *Perspectives in Health Information Management* (Summer 2009): 6.