



HIM Reimagined

Transformation starts with you.

The [HIM Reimagined White Paper](#) (HIMR) was released by AHIMA in 2016. It is a 10-year, multi-phased plan to ensure current and future professionals are prepared for the future of HIM in the rapidly changing environment resulting from changes in healthcare, technology, and education. It is now two years into HIMR and this update is offered to outline the proposed recommendations, actions taken to date, and continued efforts to achieve the goals set forth in HIMR.

The ultimate message of HIMR is about raising the academic level of HIM professionals. As time and technology continue to advance, the jobs available to people when they graduate from an associate level HIM program will shift, requiring different skill sets. [Research](#) conducted in the development of HIMR identified increased employer demands in the future for HIM professionals at the baccalaureate and graduate levels of education.

HIMR included four primary recommendations:

1. Recommendation: Increase the number of AHIMA members who hold relevant graduate degrees, (e.g., HIM, Health Informatics, MBA, MD, MEd, MPH) to 20 percent of total membership within 10 years)

Status Update: Since AHIMA began tracking education levels in 2012, graduate prepared members (Master's and Doctoral Levels) have risen from 8 percent to 14 percent (as of January 30, 2019).

2. Recommendation: In collaboration with other health and health-related organizations, in the public and private sectors, build a mechanism to ensure availability of research that supports health informatics and information management.

Status Update: Tactics to achieve this recommendation will be planned for 2020 and beyond and in collaboration with the AHIMA Foundation, as appropriate.

3. Recommendation: Increase the opportunities for specialization across all levels of the HIM academic spectrum through curricula revision, while retaining a broad foundation in HIM and analytics.

Status Update: New curriculum competencies have been approved and released for implementation by 2021. Focused specialty content is required for Associate programs.

4. Recommendation: RHIA credential is recognized as the standard for HIM generalist practice and the RHIT (+Specialty) as the technical level of practice.

Status Update: This recommendation was made in awareness that any decision related to changing the existing RHIT certification would require approval of the Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM).

Sub-recommendation 4A: Transition the RHIT credential to a specialty focused associate level over a multi-year, multi-phased approach.

At this time, CCHIIM has elected not to move forward with the HIMR recommendation for the RHIT+ certification. CCHIIM understands there is more than one way to designate specialty knowledge. For example, through micro-credentialing or certificates instead of certifications. For this reason, and as a result of the concerns voiced by AHIMA members about a potential change to the existing RHIT certification, CCHIIM reached the conclusion to not move in the direction of the RHIT+ specialty credential.



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CCHIIM's responsibility is to conduct the necessary research to validate all AHIMA certifications for the purpose of maintaining the highest industry standards related to our certifications. CCHIIM, on an ongoing basis will explore these new and emerging ways, along with the traditional job analysis, to designate skills and knowledge for not only the RHIT, but also for all AHIMA certifications.

Sub-recommendation 4B: Ensure clear pathways exist between associate and baccalaureate HIM programs to encourage existing HIM professionals and new entrants to the HIM profession to earn a baccalaureate degree and a RHIA credential.

Curriculum competencies have been released and implementation is required by 2021. The competencies were designed to reflect changing workforce demands and accommodate inherent programmatic differences. The competency structure allows for movement from Associate through graduate levels, minimizing content duplication, saving students time and money.

The broad nature of the competencies allows for programs to align academic experiences with the needs of their individual marketplaces. The new competencies outline two areas of specialty focus; revenue cycle management and data management. Associate programs must select at least one specialty area of focus. A program may decide to offer both areas of focus, however it is not required. In all cases, the intent is to produce better prepared students in areas of growing need.

AHIMA is committed to the continued relevancy of the Association and the HIM profession. Efforts such as AHIMA's strategy reset and HIMR are evidence of the ways that AHIMA is preparing for a future that places HIM professionals front and center in a world where data is ubiquitous and arising from previously unimaginable sources. To capture these new opportunities, we must be willing to adapt to the changes in healthcare and let go of part of our past to realize an even more successful future.