Health Information Management

Practicum Information for
Health Information Management
Site Supervisors
Re: Practicum supervisor for CHA Learning student(s)

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for providing the opportunity for a Health Information Management student to learn about the hands-on practice of HIM in your organization. We consider your participation in the Practicum experience a significant contribution to the field and to the development of new professionals, and we appreciate you sharing your knowledge and expertise with our students.

The practicum component is an integral and mandatory part of the program at CHA Learning and is a requirement of the Canadian Health Information Management Association (CHIMA). Practical experiences reinforce learning through hands-on experience and provide an opportunity to develop and improve students’ skills concurrently with the educational component. It is also an opportunity for organizations to assess potential new hires and orient the student to organizational processes and procedures.

Over the past several years, our program has continued to evolve to meet the needs of the HIM field, the healthcare system, employers and students. We are eager to continue to work with you to gather and use your feedback to ensure our graduates are well prepared to meet the challenges of today’s healthcare organizations.

Below you will find details about the practicum sessions, including key dates and requirements. We hope this will assist you in planning for the time the student(s) will be learning with you. If at any time you have questions or feedback, please contact us. We also do an annual survey of practicum supervisors each spring.

We thank you for supporting developing HIM Professionals. Please note you are also entitled to CHIMA CPE credits as a preceptor.

Sincerely,

Jessica Schierbeck, MPA, BHA, CHIM
Director, Quality, Performance & Evaluation
HealthCareCAN/CHA Learning
613-241-8005 ext 212
jshierbeck@healthcarecan.ca
Students in Health Information Management complete a total of 10 weeks, or 350 practicum hours over the course of the program. The practicums are to be completed in blocks of 35 or 70 hours (one or two week practicums). As CHA Learning offers distance education to students all across Canada, students are responsible for approaching potential practicum sites to secure a placement in their local area. Please read through the roles and responsibilities below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Practicum Site</th>
<th>CHA Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approach potential sites and secure practicum in a timely fashion, prior to program application.</td>
<td>Accept or deny students based on resources and availability.</td>
<td>Provide guidelines and support to students in approaching sites and securing practicums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Practicum Support Letter completed by practicum supervisor and included with program application</td>
<td>Upon acceptance, sign Practicum Support Letter and support student through duration of their program.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure timely compliance with organizational requirements, policies and procedures including mandatory practicum clearance (immunization, police record checks and other documentation)</td>
<td>Communicate organizational requirements to student and/or CHA Learning as applicable.</td>
<td>As appropriate, meet organizational requirements for documentation and support, and/or discuss any requirements with organizations as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform CHA Learning of any site-specific requirements requiring input</td>
<td>Work with student and CHA Learning to facilitate compliance with any organizational requirements, as required.</td>
<td>Facilitate provision of documentation and special site requirements, such as affiliation agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After entry to program, provide practicum guides to practicum supervisor</td>
<td>Review practicum guides with student and team in planning practicum activities.</td>
<td>Develop and provide clear practicum guides which include well-defined learning activities and outcomes. Support sites and students as required to facilitate the learning experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure practicum session dates are booked with practicum site, and completed by CHA Learning’s deadlines.</td>
<td>Work with student to book practicum session dates that are mutually convenient and which allow the student to meet deadlines.</td>
<td>Set clear practicum deadlines at the beginning of the academic year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abide by practicum guidelines, learning activities and objectives.</td>
<td>Provide appropriate experience to meet learning objectives and activities. Discuss with student and CHA learning any requirement for exceptions.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act professionally and courteously in all dealings with practicum site.</td>
<td>Support ongoing student learning and application of knowledge in practice.</td>
<td>Support students and practicum sites in managing situations of conflict or difficulty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure completion of practicum deliverables or projects, and that practicum supervisor evaluates each practicum session.</td>
<td>Evaluate each practicum session and any projects or deliverables using provided forms.</td>
<td>Provide clear evaluation forms. Assess final practicum evaluations and deliverables.</td>
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</table>

**Important Notes:**

- The regulations around arranging practicums operate differently in the province of Alberta compared to other areas of Canada. Alberta Residents must follow an alternate application process. Please see the HIM Program website for more details. Please note that there is an earlier application deadline for Alberta Residents.

- Acceptance by the practicum site does not guarantee acceptance to the HIM Program at CHA Learning. Students must apply and meet the program requirements for entry into the program.

- CHA Learning does not keep an inventory of practicum sites, contacts or site requirements. CHA Learning has students from across Canada and cannot maintain a database of such information given changing requirements and numerous jurisdictions in which our students reside.
Vaccines & Criminal Record Checks:

CHA Learning requires all students to submit proof of immunization and regular criminal record checks prior to beginning practicum placements. This is in response to requirements from organizations documented in affiliation agreements. CHA Learning will not be notifying practicum sites when individual students have confirmed documentation as all students must submit these requirements. CHA Learning will communicate with practicum sites only if there is a problem. Sites requiring documents to be submitted by students are asked to request them from the students directly.

Practicum Schedule and Deadlines

Each practicum must be completed by the student by a specified deadline in the given semester (see table below). Scheduling of the actual practicum session dates is flexible, to be determined by the student and the practicum site. However, students should not be starting their practicums until after mid-term exams in each semester. If alternate dates need to be arranged, students should contact CHA Learning in advance of the practicum placement.

### Full Time Stream (Two Year Program)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Practicum</th>
<th># of Hours</th>
<th>Completed Practicum Package Due to CHA Learning by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester One (Fall)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Winter)</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>255</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Late July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester One (Fall)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Winter)</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>455</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Late July</td>
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</table>

### Part Time Stream (Four Year Program)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Practicum</th>
<th># of Hours</th>
<th>Completed Practicum Package Due to CHA Learning by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester One (Fall)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Winter)</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Three</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester One (Fall)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year Three</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Late May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Winter)</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Four</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester One (Fall)</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Mid December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Four</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Late July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Two (Winter)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Other important information:**

**WSIB**
In most facilities, students are required to have Workplace Safety/ Workers’ Compensation (WSIB/WCB) coverage in order to secure placements. Some facilities cover students while they are on site. Currently, CHA Learning is able to provide students in Ontario, Alberta and BC with workplace safety coverage for placements. If your organization requires students to acquire external workplace insurance, please have the student contact us to request coverage.

Meanwhile, CHA Learning strongly encourages students to purchase personal disability and/or critical injury insurance from your own personal insurance provider.

**Insurance**
Please note, CHA Learning does have comprehensive general liability insurance and errors & omissions insurance in the amount of $5,000,000. If your organization would like a copy of the liability insurance certificate, please contact CHA Learning, chalearning@healthcarecan.ca.

**Affiliation Agreements**
If your organization requires an affiliation agreement, please contact CHA Learning, chalearning@healthcarecan.ca.
Practicum Learning Objectives

Each practicum session requires specific learning activities to be completed, and students are expected to acquire specific learning outcomes as a result. These are documented below for the first four practicums in the program. CHA Learning understands that practicum sites may be unable to provide opportunities for students to experience all required activities due to operational constraints or the nature of the organization. Any major modification to practicum learning activities must be discussed with CHA Learning in advance of the practicum session.

The student will provide a learning guide for each practicum to the supervisor prior to each placement. The specific learning guides have detailed information about the activities they must complete as well as information about what they have learned to date.

Practicum 150 – 35 Hours

Practicum Learning Outcomes
After completing students practicum will be able to:

- Synthesize and evaluate accountability for all actions taken during the practicum.
- Conduct self-evaluation of performance against documented standards to ascertain and articulate whether more practice in a skill is required.
- Integrate privacy, confidentiality, and professional ethics during practicum.
- Demonstrate and synthesize appropriate professional attitudes and conduct.
- Participate effectively and cooperatively on a team, project or committee.
- Discriminate between clinical facility practices and theory taught in the learning environment and rationalize the differences.
- Demonstrate time management and problem-solving skills.
- Adapt to a variety of technologies and software packages.
- Apply learning theory to the practicum setting.
- Demonstrate skills in written and verbal communications.

Learning Activities
The types of learning activities available may vary depending on the site; however, they will likely include many common elements such as:

- Reviewing the facility’s policies on confidentiality and privacy.
- Spending time with various people within the HIM department or area and possibly other departments such as patient registration/intake and see what they do in relation to patient documentation.
- Documenting the flow of patient information throughout the department or area.
- Charting the various positions within the area and show how each person functions.
- Identifying what information is collected on patients, when it is collected, how it is reviewed for accuracy and how this information is used.
• Noting how information is organized and stored in this facility and whether it is available in paper or on computer. If charts are available in paper format, you should participate in chart assembly. If information is on computer, observe how it is scanned and indexed.
• Performing quantitative and qualitative analysis on a paper record or review documentation on computer for completeness and accuracy.
• Observing how the department deals with remedying incomplete or inaccurate information.
• Noting how the admission-discharge-transfer system works and what software the facility uses for this.
• Transcribing information, if you have the opportunity, to see where it fits in to the provision of accurate and complete information.
• Preparing and submitting the following:
  • An organization chart of the HIM department where your practicum took place
  • A workflow diagram documenting how information and records flow into, through and out of the HIM department
  • A written paper, approximately 500 words in length, proving a summary in the student’s own words of the organization’s medical staff bylaws regarding chart completion and a discussion of their importance to Health Information Management and high quality patient care.

**Practicum 250 – 35 Hours**

**Practicum Learning Outcomes**
After completing this practicum you will be able to:

• Discuss records management processes and policies.
• Synthesize and evaluate accountability for all actions taken during the practicum.
• Conduct self-evaluation of performance against documented standards to ascertain and articulate whether more practice in a skill is required.
• Integrate privacy, confidentiality, and professional ethics during practicum.
• Demonstrate and synthesize appropriate professional attitudes and conduct.
• Participate effectively and cooperatively on a team, project or committee.
• Discriminate between clinical facility practices and theory taught in the learning environment and rationalize the differences.
• Demonstrate time management and problem-solving skills.
• Adapt to a variety of technologies and software packages.
• Apply learning theory to the practicum setting.
• Demonstrate skills in written and verbal communications.

**Practicum Learning Activities**
Practicum 250 has a focus on the records management activities of the organization [CHIMA LOHIM 2010, Appendix A]. Students, in conjunction with the applicable staff, must review the policies, procedures and any applicable legislation the organization uses related to records...
management. Wherever possible, the practicum site should provide opportunities for the student to view and participate in processes to gain hands-on experience in the activities listed. The student will submit a 1000 word report summarizing the following:

- The facility’s processes for maintaining and using a Master Patient Index.
- Health information flow throughout the facility, and externally
- Processes for ensuring accuracy and completeness of information, both on paper and electronically
- Data collection processes and databases utilized across the organization, including minimum data sets, collection for specific uses, format of data collection for input and viewing (electronic and paper forms)
- Forms development process, paper and electronic (committees, processes, policies, form examples)
- Access and use of HI [use of audit trails, documentation changes, updates to documentation, authentication of users, safeguarding processes etc.]
- Enterprise records management systems
- Management of inactive records and HI
- Storage of active and inactive records
- Retention of data files including paper and electronic records
- Destruction processes
- Compliance with applicable legislation
- Education of clinical staff with regards to records management processes

**Practicum 252 – 35 Hours**

**Practicum Learning Outcomes**
After completing this practicum you will be able to:

- Discuss principles of privacy, confidentiality and security and how it applies to the work environment.
- Synthesize and evaluate accountability for all actions taken during the practicum.
- Conduct self-evaluation of performance against documented standards to ascertain and articulate whether more practice in a skill is required.
- Integrate privacy, confidentiality, and professional ethics during practicum.
- Demonstrate and synthesize appropriate professional attitudes and conduct.
- Participate effectively and cooperatively on a team, project or committee.
- Discriminate between clinical facility practices and theory taught in the learning environment and rationalize the differences.
- Demonstrate time management and problem-solving skills.
- Adapt to a variety of technologies and software packages.
- Apply learning theory to the practicum setting.
- Demonstrate skills in written and verbal communications.
Practicum Learning Activities
The student will witness and participate in activities and processes related to the maintenance and management of privacy and confidentiality, including:

- Reviewing the facility’s policies on confidentiality and privacy and any applicable legislation.
- Identifying what information is collected on patients, when it is collected, how it is reviewed for accuracy and how this information is used.
- Using manual and electronic systems to log and track access and disclosure of health information.
- Reviewing how the facility releases identifiable health information to patients and third parties.
- Reviewing how the facility manages the de-identification and aggregation of health information and the policy and procedure for release of this information.
- Identifying how this facility implements its “lock box” and deals with situations where patients want information changed in their records.
- Identifying how the HIM professionals advocate for the protection of patient information.
- Applying policies and practices to manage the disclosure and release of information.
- Explaining the obligations and practices related to the management of privacy or security breaches.

The student will submit a minimum 1000 word report summarizing all of the above practices of the practicum organization and whether organizational practices are consistent with theory learned in the program.

Practicum 255 – 70 Hours

Practicum Learning Outcomes
After completing this practicum you will be able to:

- Apply knowledge and skills acquired to code NACRS Emergency records.
- Synthesize and evaluate accountability for all actions taken during the practicum.
- Conduct self-evaluation of performance against documented standards to ascertain and articulate whether more practice in a skill is required.
- Integrate privacy, confidentiality, and professional ethics during practicum.
- Demonstrate and synthesize appropriate professional attitudes and conduct.
- Participate effectively and cooperatively on a team, project or committee.
- Discriminate between clinical facility practices and theory taught in the learning environment and rationalize the differences.
- Demonstrate time management and problem-solving skills.
- Adapt to a variety of technologies and software packages.
- Apply learning theory to the practicum setting.
- Demonstrate skills in written and verbal communications.
Practicum Learning Activities

Practicum 255 has a focus on coding and abstracting NACRS Emergency records.

- The student will code and abstract 150-200 NACRS Emergency records during the practicum.
- The student will use knowledge gained in the biomedical sciences and medical terminology and apply this in chart review and code selection.
- The student will use CIHI abstracting manuals and coding standards to support their learning of the coding and abstracting process.
- The student will work with staff coders to support their learning of the coding and abstracting process.
- The student will write and submit a 350-500 word summary of the coding experience and their strengths and challenges faced during the practicum.

Level 2 Practicums

The aforementioned practicums are completed in level 1. Level 2 practicums focus on coding and a major project. Information about level 2 practicums is available upon request.