



What does a coding specialist do?

Coding specialists, also referred to as medical records and health information technicians, organize and manage health information data. They ensure this information maintains its quality, accuracy, accessibility and security in both paper files and electronic systems. Coding specialists use various classification systems to code and categorize patient information for insurance reimbursement, databases and registries, and to store patients' medical and treatment histories.

What kind of skills or traits does a coding specialist need?

- **Analytical skills** – Coding specialists need to understand and follow medical records and diagnoses, and then decide how best to code them in a patient's medical record.
- **Detail-oriented** – Be accurate when recording and coding patient information.
- **Integrity** – Coding specialists work with patient data that is required, by law, to be kept confidential. They must use caution and have a strong sense of ethics when working with this information in order to protect patient confidentiality.
- **Interpersonal skills** – Be able to discuss patient information, discrepancies and data requirements with other professionals such as physicians and finance personnel.
- **Technical skills** – Be able to use coding and classification software and the electronic health record (EHR) system that their health care organization or physician practice has adopted.

What is the job outlook for a coding specialist?

Employment of coding specialists is projected to grow 15 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations. The demand for health services is expected to increase as the population ages.*

*Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Where does a coding specialist work?

Most coding specialists work in hospitals or physician offices.

What kind of education do you need to become a coding specialist?

Coding specialists typically need a postsecondary certification, although some may need an associate's degree.

What is the average salary of a coding specialist?

The median annual wage for a coding specialist was \$38,040 in May 2016.*

*Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

“What I like about working at Lake Health is the people. Everyone is nice and we work so well together as a team.”

– Heather Lesko