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Clinical Involvement in Health Information Technology

Skill Assessment



The successful deployment of key health information technology (HIT) initiatives requires positive clinician involvement to ensure their buy-in, support, and “meaningful use” of the system. To ensure clinical involvement, roles that are relatively new to the C-suite are emerging with a stronger focus. A few key clinical IT roles are outlined below, along with some template job descriptions.

Chief Medical informatics officers (CMIO), Medical Directors of Information Systems (MDIS), Director Clinical Informatics, and Chief Clinical Officer (CCO) require a unique skills set as the liaison between the medical and IT community. The skill set for any CMIO type role required for your specific organization will vary based on the size, caliber, specialties, and focus of your healthcare system. Following is a template for a CMIO job description.

CMIO Job Description

Position: Chief Medical Informatics Officer / CMIO

Reports to: _____ (CIO or CMO usually).

Summary: The CMIO coordinates activities of HIT projects with interested members of the organization’s medical staff and affiliated physicians. In this role, the CMIO will translate clinical initiatives to physicians and translate physician needs to the IT staff. The CMIO will be involved in all facets of the clinical implementation, including an EHR, EMR, or CPOE. To effectively communicate and create usable software tools, the CMIO will create a core clinical informatics team. This team will include those clinicians with clinical informatics skill sets / experience, departmental leaders, IT, and other interested physicians.

Role Requirements:

1. Consensus builder: Engages physicians and others to help develop and use HIT and works in concert with IT staff
2. Change agent: Reviews medical informatics trends to spur adoption of HIT

4. Ensures usable tools: Leads design and modification of clinical pathways and decision support domain teams
5. Participates in development of solutions that evaluate clinical outcomes
7. Leads the design and evaluation of data collection for clinical purposes
8. Guides development of clinical documentation user interfaces
9. Participates in patient care, assessment, and research
10. Ensures the development of a core clinical informatics team to achieve results

Skills/Experience Required:

- Board certified MD with a minimum of ___ years of experience practicing medicine
- Proven track record of success implementing EHR initiatives
- Demonstrated knowledge of evidence-based medical principles and practices
- Collaborative management style
- Strong communication and presentation skills
- Understanding of clinical work flow across departments, enterprise-wide
- Politically savvy
- Advanced degree / certification in medical informatics highly desirable

CNO and Other Clinician Roles in HIT

Nurses and other clinicians play key roles in all elements of HIT strategic planning, selection, implementation, and use. The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) is a key leader in this process.

CNO Role Requirements:

- Assists physicians and clinicians in educating on use of software and tools
- Ensures that there is quality focus on workflow and workflow changes
- Helps to build desire for HIT solutions as part of workflow
- Sets expectations for success.

HIM Executive Role

The health information management (HIM) executive in the organization should be actively engaged as the official custodian of the medical record. The HIM executive is primarily responsible for documentation management—process that must transition to an electronic medical record.

Additional Clinical Roles in HIT

Analysts, Sr Analysts, Project Managers and Directors with a clinical background, such as an RN designation are critical to a successful EHR deployment. Additionally,

administrative/financial professionals who understand clinically driven revenue cycles are also key.

Additional Resources

A number of professional membership and other organizations provide excellent resources, such as a body of knowledge, distance learning programs, seminars, webinars, and conferences.

- American Health Information Management Association
- American Medical Informatics Association
- American Nursing Informatics Association
- Healthcare Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS)
- The Association of Medical Directors of Information Systems (AMDIS)
- The American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA)

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www.ssi-search.com

info@ssi-search.com

404-873-3338