

Southeast Technical Institute

New Program Application

Medical Coding Certificates

Certified Professional Coder (CPC)

Certified Professional Biller (CPB)



Fall 2017

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Medical Coding Certificates

Executive Summary

Southeast Tech currently provides an AAS in Medical Coding. Medical Coders assign codes to classify and index diagnoses and procedures for the purpose of reimbursement, standardization, retrieval and statistical analysis using nationally recognized coding systems. These graduates are knowledgeable in medical insurance and reimbursement systems and proficient in the use of coding systems in clinics and hospitals. Upon completion of the program, students may apply to sit for the certified examination sponsored through American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC).

Southeast Tech proposes two certificates stacked within the existing Medical Coding AAS:

The Certified Professional Coder (CPC) provides seven courses in basic and intermediate coding along with essential skills in anatomy and physiology and medical terminology. This certificate will allow graduates to ensure that information related to coding maintains its quality, accuracy, accessibility and security in both paper files and electronic systems.

The Certified Professional Biller (CPB) provides five courses in basic coding along with required knowledge of billing, office procedures and reimbursement requirements. This certificate will allow graduates to work with all aspects of health billing including data validity, customer support and insurance processes.

These one-year certificates allow people to enter the workforce sooner and provide the foundation for completing the entire Medical Coding Degree, which will be available in an online format. There are separate skill sets needed for Medical Coding for the clinic setting and Medical Coding for the hospital setting. In a clinic setting, the coding is more focused, whereas coding in hospitals is more complex and requires more sophisticated skill sets. The diploma was Southeast Tech's initial program for health offices, such as clinics. This certificate program offers an entry point along the Medical Coding career pathway. Certificate program graduates can continue with the AAS program, should they want to acquire the skills needed for a hospital setting.

The medical coding and billing industry faces a shortage of qualified coders and billers after the recent coding change to ICD 10. Employers have seen individuals retire and these short-term certificates are a quicker response to help fill this need.

Identification and Description of the Program

Southeast Tech is proposing to establish two certificates stacked within the existing two-year Medical Coding AAS Degree. These coding and billing certificates are designed to provide graduates with the skills to become a successful medical coder or biller and to prepare students to sit for the certification exam.

The program will cover only the essential courses needed for the specific coding or billing certificate. The CPC program will take three semesters to complete and the CPB program will be completed in two semesters.

Objectives and Purpose of the Program

The primary objective of these certificates is to provide qualified personnel for the billing and coding areas of the health care industry. These objectives will be met by providing an education that prepares the graduate to be employed as a certified medical coder or a certified biller.

There is increased demand for coders as the health care industry implemented ICD 10. The increasing number of federal and insurance regulations are creating an increased demand for billers as well.

The objectives of the program include:

Certified Professional Coder

- Interprets medical documentation from physicians and healthcare providers to assign diagnostic and procedural codes.
- Navigates the Electronic Medical Record (EHR) and coding software proficiently.
- Adheres to standards, ethical coding guidelines established by professional health information associations.
- Protects the security of medical records to ensure confidentiality.
- Reviews and identifies chargeable items for completeness, accuracy and compliance.

- Remains up-to-date with coding guidelines and reimbursement recording requirements.
- Knowledge of governmental and commercial payer's policies.
- Follows HIPAA guidelines in handling patient's personal health information (PHI).

Certified Professional Biller

- Adheres HIPAA guidelines for handling patient protected health information (PHI).
- Prepares and sends insurance claims.
- Resolves patient's denials by working with insurance companies or governmental agencies,
- Reviews patient bills for accuracy and completeness,
- Follows up on unpaid or rejected claims within billing cycle timeframe.
- Contacts payers regarding discrepancies in payments.
- Identifies and bills primary, supplemental, secondary tertiary and supplemental payers.
- Answers responsible party questions on patient responsibility portions, copay, deductibles and write offs.
- Prepares appeals to insurance carriers if necessary.

Methods of Attaining the Objectives of the Program

Upon receipt of the State Board of Education approval, Southeast Tech will accept up to 24 students in each certificate beginning in the Fall Semester of 2017. The marketing campaign to recruit students will include a comprehensive media mix.

The one-year Certified Professional Coding certificate will consist of medical terminology, anatomy, physiology, basic current procedural terminology (CPT) coding, basic international statistical classification of diseases (ICD) coding, and coding and reimbursement requirements.

The nine-month Certified Professional Billing certificate will consist of an overview of insurance, billing, CPT coding, ICD coding, general office procedures and practices, and coding and reimbursement requirements.

The students will receive an extensive amount of hands-on laboratory time in coding and billing practices to develop their skill and prepare them for an entry-level position.

The Certified Professional Coding and Billing certificates will be offered traditionally, during the day, at Southeast Tech and in a blended online format that would have the student spend time on campus to complete laboratory requirements.

During the development of the Medical Coding program, Southeast Tech obtained guidance from several individuals in the health care industry and our Coding Advisory Committee has provided assistance in the development and review of these certifications.

Description of Labor Market Demands of the United States, State of South Dakota, Student Needs, and Industry Support

National Data

According to the 2014 – 2024 National Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is an expected increase of 15% for Medical Records and Health Information Technicians, a position a Certified Professional Coder could obtain. There is an expected increase of 13% for Billing and Posting Clerks, a position a Certified Professional Biller could obtain. See Table Below.

National Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014 – 2024				
Occupational Title	Certification	Empl 2014	Empl 2024	2014 – 2024 %
29-2071: Medical Records and Health Information Technician	CPC	188,600	217,600	15%
43-3021: Billing and Posting Clerks	CPB	514,600	581,100	13%

State/Regional Data

According to the 2014 – 2024 South Dakota Occupational Employment Projections, there is an expected increase of 8.63% for Medical Records and Health Information Technicians and an increase of 9.1% for Billing and Posting Clerks. This is a projected increase of 169 positions during this period. See Table Below.

South Dakota Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014 – 2024				
Occupational Title	Certification	Empl 2014	Empl 2024	2014 – 2024 %
29-2071: Medical Records and Health Information Technician	CPC	985	1,070	8.63%
43-3021: Billing and Posting Clerks	CPB	923	1,007	9.1%

Student Needs

This program will provide students with an opportunity to enter an expanding industry at a beginning entry point after earning a certification. The program provides for areas for growth as the student can obtain multiple certificates and the Medical Coding AAS degree through online methodology while continuing to work in the field. These programs are short and provide only essential skills needed for employment. Students who would like to pursue a career in hospital coding will be encouraged to pursue the AAS Degree as most hospital coding positions require the degree.

Industry support

Southeast Tech has met with leaders of Avera and Sanford Health and has received a strong level of support, indicated by the letters of support attached in Appendix B.

Population to be Served by the Program

STI will recruit students from a variety of backgrounds, including both traditional and non-traditional. It is anticipated that this program will attract students directly out of high school in addition to those who are unemployed, underemployed and those wanting to make a career change. The three tiers for this program provide students multiple pathways to enter an exciting health career. With the extremely low unemployment in Sioux Falls our advisory committees have been asking for program options which allow students to enter the workforce sooner. As we look at ways to create stacked educational opportunities for students the addition of a credential serves as an entry point for someone into higher education and we hope that students will continue their education while working to earn a diploma or degree.

Program Capacity

Starting Semester	Delivery Format	Capacity
Fall 2017	Traditional Day	24
Fall 2017	Online	24

Projected Three-Year Budget Plan

BUDGET PROJECTIONS			
Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Salaries/Benefits	\$31,680.00	\$32,630.00	\$33,610.00
Staff Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Instructional Materials	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Capital Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Software/Books/Fees	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Totals	\$33,680.00	\$34,630.00	\$35,610.00

Salaries/Benefits/FTE/Equipment

The certificate programs will be taught on an adjunct basis. Southeast Tech will utilize existing Medical Coding budgetary capabilities and laboratory space.

Program Competencies and entry and exit points of sub-occupations

Program Competencies are based upon the standards of the Health Care industry for billing and coding clerks. The addition of certificate options would provide additional pathways for incumbent workers. The certificate pathway provide opportunities for entry-level positions in billing and coding in the healthcare industry. The diploma pathway provides opportunities for similar entry-level positions, but provides a better pathway for students wanting the AAS degree, which is required for hospital coding.

Certified Professional Coder

Entry Point: Fall 2017

Exit Point: Summer 2018

Certified Professional Biller

Entry Point: Fall 2017

Exit Point: Summer 2018

Statement of non-duplication

Western Dakota Tech offers a Coding Specialist option in their Health Information Management program. Given geographical differences we are working with different student populations and each school works with different health care systems.

Curriculum design and research

Southeast Tech designed a curriculum after an extensive review consisting of curriculum searches, academic review of competencies, and through discussion with industry professionals. The curriculum is shown in Appendix A.

Wage Factor

Data from Southeast Tech graduate surveys show companies in the Sioux Falls region starting our Coding Graduates anywhere from \$17.00/hr to \$22.00/hr for those working in reimbursement. Data from the South Dakota Department of Labor Occupational Wage Estimates through May 2015 positions the hourly mean wage from \$13.84 to \$18.21. See Table Below:

South Dakota Department of Labor Occupational Wage Estimates May 2015 Data				Percentile				
Occupation	Area	Workers	Hourly Mean	10 th	25 th	50 th	75 th	90 th
29-2071: Medical Records and Health Information Technician	State	1010	\$18.21	\$12.20	\$13.76	\$16.89	\$21.63	\$27.38
43-3021: Billing and Posting Clerks	State	890	\$13.84	\$10.30	\$11.58	\$13.41	\$15.27	\$18.20

Southeast Tech contacted Orthopedic Institute regarding positions and salary data related to these two certificate options. Orthopedic Institute would start Certified Professional Biller graduates in the accounts receivable department at \$13.00 to \$14.00 per hour. Orthopedic Institute would start Certified Professional Coder graduates at \$17.00 to \$18.00 per hour.

Southeast Tech contacted Avera regarding positions and salary data related to these two certificate options. Avera would start Certified Professional Biller graduates in the accounts receivable department at \$13.50 per hour. Avera would start Certified Professional Coder graduates at \$17.00 to \$20.00 per hour.

Southeast Tech contacted DocuTap regarding positions and salary data related to these two certificate options. DocuTap would start Certified Professional Biller graduates in the accounts receivable department at \$13.00 to \$14.00 per hour. DocuTap would start Certified Professional Coder graduates at \$18.00 per hour.

Data from the National Department of Labor positions the 2015 hourly mean wage from \$17.45 to \$19.44. See Table Below:

National Department of Labor Occupational Wage Estimates May 2015 Data				Percentile				
Occupation	Area	Workers	Hourly Mean	10 th	25 th	50 th	75 th	90 th
29-2071: Medical Records and Health Information Technician	State	189,930	\$19.44	\$11.63	\$14.01	\$17.84	\$23.32	\$29.52
43-3021: Billing and Posting Clerks	Nation	491,070	\$17.45	\$11.81	\$13.89	\$16.85	\$20.29	\$24.15

CIP Code

Coding: 51.0713 Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder. A program that prepares individuals to perform specialized data entry, classification, and record-keeping procedures related to medical diagnostic, treatment, billing, and insurance documentation. Includes instruction in medical records and insurance software applications, basic anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, data classification and coding, data entry skills, and regulations relating to Medicare and insurance documentation.

Appendix A –Program Course List and Semester Layout (Online)

Certified Professional Coder Layout

Semester	Course Title	Credits	Lect/Lab
First			
HC 110	Basic Anatomy	3	3/0
HC 113	Medical Terminology	2	2/0
CODE 112	Basic CPT Coding	3	2/2
		8	
Second			
CODE 110	Basic ICD Coding	3	2/2
CODE 122	Intermediate CPT Coding	3	2/2
		6	
Third			
CODE 120	Intermediate ICD 10 Coding	3	2/2
CODE 180	CPC Review	2	2/0
		5	

Certified Professional Biller Layout

Semester	Course Title	Credits	Lect/Lab
First			
HCOS 121	Insurance/Billing/Coding	3	3/0
HCOS 101	Introduction to HCOS	3	2/2
CODE 112	Basic CPT Coding	3	2/2
		9	
Second			
CODE 110	Basic ICD Coding	3	2/2
CODE 250	Coding/Reimbursement Revenue Cycle	3	2/2
		6	

Program Course List with Descriptions

CODE 110 – Basic ICD Coding – 3 Credits

This course is a basic introduction to the ICD 10 CM coding classification system. Students will learn the format and proper techniques for looking up diagnosis codes. Students will practice assigning diagnosis codes and validate coding accuracy according to the patient health record. Diagnosis codes will be assigned from the ICD 10 CM manual and Encoder software.

CODE 112 – Basic CPT Coding – 3 Credits

This course is an introduction to basic procedural coding format and guidelines. Students will focus on evaluation and management codes based on the place of service, type of service and level of service according to CMS' documentation guidelines. Basic procedural and surgical CPT codes will be applied based on established coding guidelines and the patient health record. Students gain practical experience using the CPT/HCPCS manuals and Encoder software.

CODE 120 – Intermediate ICD 10 Coding – 3 Credits

This course is an in-depth study of the ICD 10 CM coding classification system. Students will assign combination and multiple codes based on the patient health record and complex coding guidelines. Emphasis is placed on ethical coding practices. Students gain practical experience using the ICD 10 CM manual and Encoder software.

CODE 122 – Intermediate CPT Coding – 3 Credits

This course is an in-depth look at procedural coding. Students will practice applying complicated procedural codes based on guideline and the patient health record. Focus is placed on the global surgical period and appropriate use of modifiers. The importance of ethical coding and following guidelines is promoted. Students gain practical experience using the CPT/HCPCS manuals and Encoder software.

CODE 180 – CPC Review – 2 Credits

This one-week course prepares students to sit for the CPC Certification exam. Anatomy, Physiology and Medical Terminology are reviewed. Students practice coding a wide range of services such as E/M, Anesthesia, Surgical Services, Radiology, Pathology and Medicine. Accurate assignment of ICD 10 CM codes is reviewed along with diagnosis coding guidelines. Medical necessity and coding regulations, including compliance and reimbursement are reinforced. Students take a practice CPC examination.

CODE 250 – Coding/Reimbursement Revenue Cycle – 3 Credits

This course introduces students to the complete revenue cycle process. Emphasis is placed on the importance of correct coding to avoid lost reimbursement. Students learn to search and understand National Coverage Determinations and Local Coverage Determinations in order to find payable diagnoses and avoid insurance denials. The proper use of modifiers and how they affect payment is also covered.

HC 110 – Basic Anatomy – 3 Credits

Designed for students beginning a health/science education and interested in pursuing an entry-level medical or health-related career. Emphasis is placed on the study of the basic structure and function of the human body. The students in the Phlebotomy and Pharmacy Technician programs will recognize the normal anatomy and be able to apply it to their respective fields.

HC 113 – Medical Terminology – 2 Credits

Designed to provide basic principles of medical word building. These principles once learned, can readily be applied to develop an extensive medical vocabulary. CD's are included and benefit students in pronunciation and definition of each word. Once satisfactory completed, students will be able to adequately communicate in the health industry.

HCOS 101 – Introduction to Health Information Services – 3 Credits

This course is designed to introduce Health Information Services students to the basic principles and practices of their career. It will include brief overviews of all the courses and job responsibilities and that are needed to study and work in Health Information Services. This will include learning and understanding the terminology associated with working with patient information as well as the laws and guidelines concerning confidentiality and professional ethics associated with a career in this area. There will be tours, guest speakers and other exploration activities to familiarize the students with a good, basic, overall knowledge of health care and how it relates to Health Information Services.

HCOS 121 – Insurance/Billing/Coding – 3 Credits

This course allows students to perform basic diagnostic and procedural coding according to nationally accepted guidelines. It will give them a basis for performing coding skills for reimbursement and documentation in the world of work. The course also offers a good overview of billing and reimbursement for Medicare, Medicaid, and a variety of other payment systems and providers. It will also provide the student with the skills to communicate with agencies involved in patient financial services.

Appendix B – Letters of Support

Avera – Sarah Svenningsen

Orthopedic Institute – Tara Cole

DocuTap – Beth Olivieri