Why Pursue a Career in Medical Billing?

by Nancy Higgins

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Medical billing professionals are health information technicians responsible for ensuring that healthcare facilities stay in business. In that respect, medical billing is one of the most important allied healthcare jobs because without good billers, the viability of a healthcare facility may suffer.

But what exactly is it that medical billers do? Whenever a patient visits a doctor's office, hospital or any other healthcare facility, they are provided some service, which may be consultation, treatment, therapy, diagnostic examination, etc.

Using standard classification system, medical coders code and categorize this information for various purposes. One of the purposes of coding patient information is for reimbursement or payment to healthcare practitioners for the services they provide.

This is where medical billers come in. They use this coded information to submit claims to patients' health insurance carriers. But their job doesn't end with submitting claims.They also have other duties related to billing processes in a medical office such as:

1. Following up with insurance carriers on payments.

2. Collecting payments disbursed by insurance companies.

3. Reviewing and processingunpaid and denied claims and refund requests.

4. Verifying patients' insurance coverage and responding to their billing queries.

5. Maintaining payment records and handling other billing related documentation.

If you found the job description interesting, here are a few reasons that may further motivate you to pursue a career in medical billing.

1. Great Job Prospects

Let's face itâ€¦ the job market isn't at its perkiest best. At a time when so many people are struggling to find employment, medical billing promises more than rosy prospects. That's a strong enough reason to give a serious consideration to this career.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of medical billing specialists is expected to increase by 21 percent in the 2010-20 decade at a much faster than average pace for all occupations.*

We can thank the aging population of our country for the growth in the employment of medical billing specialists. As people age, their demand for health services increases, which is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the healthcare reimbursement activity in a medical office.

2. Attractive Pay

Medical billing salary is another reason why choosing this profession can prove to be a smart career

move. According to the data available with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual medical billing salary in May 2010 was $32,350.**

3. Multiple Training Options

There are several medical billing training options for individuals interested in this career and that's one of the biggest things going in favor of this profession.

You can get an Associate's degree from a community college or complete a postsecondary medical billing training program from a career school. You have the option of completing your program on campus or enroll for a flexible, self-paced online medical billing training course.

You can also choose between a program that's billing specific and one that includes training in both medical coding and billing functions.

4. Several Employment Opportunities

Once you are trained and qualified for medical billing jobs, you'll be able to find employment in a multitude of settings that include doctors' offices, hospitals, nursing care facilities, and other healthcare units. You may also find employment with health insurance companies.

You may also be able to choose whether you want to work full-time or take up a part time position. Since a lot of medical offices function 24/7, you can negotiate for flexi timings or weekend work, if needed. Telecommuting or working on a contract basis from home is also notuncommon for medical billing specialists.

If you have an entrepreneurial streak, you may want to explore the option of starting your own medical billing business. It's easy enough to set up and the start-up cost is pretty low. You can, in fact, start your medical billing business from home.

5. Job Security & Satisfaction

It's rare to find jobs that offer you the kind of sense of security that medical billing provides. Because it belongs to the healthcare industry, the profession is pretty resilient to recessionary influences. Also, even though medical billing specialists are not involved in direct patient care, they draw immense satisfaction from the fact that they help patients with a very important aspect of healthcare delivery.

Source:

*bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm#tab-6

**bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm#tab-5

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Nancy is a 36-year old stay at home mom of two. She worked as a medical assistant for five years before taking a break to be with her children. Her experience as a medical assistant gave her

valuable insights in to the medical billing and coding industry, which she likes to share with others through her writing. a Medical billing and coding programs often find mention in her writings. Her expertise in a Medical billing and coding training stems from her extensive research on the subject. Her other interests include gardening and baking. She stays with her husband and two daughters.

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