

Nursing Informatics Careers -The Future of Healthcare



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Introduction

Nursing Informatics is at the forefront of technology innovation in the healthcare world. As technology advances, nursing informatics jobs are in demand in many organizations. Informatics nurses are trained to interpret technology from diverse perspectives including patient care, nursing work flow and information technology. Healthcare organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of nursing informatics. Informatics brings value to organizations by integrating information systems and knowledge to manage nursing efficiency and to create an optimal patient experience. The nurse informatics specialty is multifaceted which creates many career opportunities that are rewarding and profitable. An informatics nurse can find a variety of career options in public health organizations, hospitals, healthcare facilities, medical software corporations, research labs, insurance agencies, educational institutions and consulting.

Nurse Informatics Specialist in Hospitals

The daily work flow incorporates helping clinical staff with any problems with the electronic system, monitoring that the system is utilized by clinicians efficiently, and educating clinical staff on any production changes within the electronic system. The nurse participates in informatics committees where they assist the members with any ideas, problems, and solutions that may arise. The nurse informatics is involved in research committees where different nurses from various departments are working on evidence-based projects that are translated into the electronic form. For example, a critical care nurse brings a problem that they discovered on their unit. The committee then seeks a solution needed. The solution is found and transitioned into an electronic version, then the staff is educated on the new workflow and the final step is the implementation.

Clinical Analyst for Corporations

In the corporation the clinical analyst can assist in creating, supporting, and maintaining current knowledge in areas of clinical specialty. They also educate, and perform workflow analysis. In order to accomplish information related activities, nurse informatics must participate in providing consultation for

external sales or customer meetings to detail and evaluate the application of the solutions in a care environment. In this role, the nurse supports solution integration through process and work flow development, and translates customer requirements to solution requirements in collaboration with a project manager and development team. For instance, the nurse can work for a corporation that sells telehealth software where his/hers function is to promote the telehealth solution, train the end user, and assists clinicians with work flow.

Quality and Performance Improvement for Healthcare Facilities

In this position the nurse is responsible for National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) accreditation and Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) performance. Research methodologies and incorporation of best practices into operations are very significant where the nurse must review and implement new technological tools and processes them to foster team engagement. In collaboration with nursing leadership, clinical staff, and operational staff, the informatics nurse is a key member of the clinical team who oversees the quality of care to achieve the best outcomes and patient experiences. The informatics nurse will be responsible for data and event monitoring, peer review coordination, facilitation of quality indicators, by utilizing improvement methodologies such as Lean Six Sigma or Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control (DMAIC) methodology and providing appropriate education to the clinicians. This methodology can serve as a roadmap for problem solving and process improvement [1]. The nurse informatics can apply the Six Sigma methodology to improve patient's care and create a higher patient's satisfaction. For example, good discharge management, bed availability for emergency and elective admissions are crucial to guarantee patient satisfaction.

Compliance Officer in Hospitals

Protection of patients' privacy and the confidentiality of their medical information has long been a tenet of nursing ethics and practice. The nursing informatics role together with the privacy

specialists have to balance the easy access that digital record keeping seeks to establish with the need for confidentiality and privacy dictated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The HIPAA Privacy rule provides federal protections for personal health information and gives patients an array of rights with respect to that information to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of electronic protected health information [2]. In complying with HIPAA regulations, the nurse informatics must guarantee that the entire patient's electronic healthcare information is properly stored.

Nurse Informatics for Insurance Agencies

For insurance companies nurse informatics may work as the educators who can serve an important function in educating patients and medical professionals about the appropriate medical treatment process. As health law in insurance payment demand more coordination of medical care, the nurses can have an even greater responsibility in making sure that the patients are receiving the right treatment [3]. The informatics nurse role supports shared decision making and increases communication in this care coordination by application of decision analysis approaches to calculate options with the highest expected value, interactive education to improve risk knowledge and automated updates of evidence to support shared decision making.

Leadership Positions

Director of Nursing Informatics and Chief Nursing Informatics Officer (CNIO) are the two leadership positions that are a great career for nurses in the informatics field. The director can serve as the strategic liaison for health technology by representing nursing and clinician needs. The director advocates and directs development and implementation of technology changes to improve quality, care experience, and efficiency across the continuum of care. The director or CNIO provides program planning, initiates strategic services in areas of clinical education, and promotes professional nursing development through the application of the development of educational programs.

CNIO are now leading many healthcare organizations where they manage new technology development, drive innovation and facilitate customer adoption [4]. This support includes principles that assist healthcare data exchange between various systems data, data repositories and clinical event monitors [5]. Informatics nurses are well suited to transition to executive level positions because they recognize the healthcare organization structure and they have an understanding of the essential requirements for healthcare analytics.

Nurse Informatics Educator in Educational Institutions

Many educational institutions are offering both online and on campus graduate degree and certificate programs in health informatics. The nurse can engage as a faculty instructor by guiding students in active collaboration and application of their learning skills and providing frequent interaction that motivates students to succeed by conveying an enthusiasm for their

learning experience. Their responsibility is to provide a positive a learning environment for students while teaching. Informatics nurse educators play a pivotal role in strengthening the nursing informatics workforce by serving as a role model providing the leadership and knowledge needed to implement technology with evidence based practice. Informatics nurses are crucial educators in assuring quality educational experiences that prepares the nursing informatics for an innovative and changing healthcare environment.

Nurse Informatics in Public Health Organizations

Informatics nurses are working with scientists in public health and epidemiology where their focus is on synthesizing, obtaining, and providing access to information and knowledge related to community and population health used by health care workers, consumers, and policymakers. The nurse can be involved in policy and ethical decisions at different levels of care and they are often the central decision maker in the distribution of healthcare resource changes in legislative policy that influence organizational policy. One of the key roles in health management is to promote and protect the health of populations. The nurse should be at the forefront of population health management being involved with administration of the healthcare delivery system using their advanced knowledge base and research ability to make healthcare more clinically effective, more cost effective and safer. The value of evidence based research has a great power in influencing policy and promoting positive outcomes for our population [6].

Conclusion

Nursing informatics is a top career in healthcare and has become an integral part of growing dynamic organizations where they can expand their growth potential because they are the experts who master the combination of technology and patient care. In order to stay current on industry trends and learn about the rewarding career opportunities, nurses should always build relationships with other nurses. Social media platforms including LinkedIn, Twitter and online nursing informatics resources such as Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and American Nursing Informatics Association (ANIA) provide the opportunity to cultivate the nursing informatics profession. Nurses should join these platforms to take advantage of the great resources in discovering how many rewarding careers there are in the nurse informatics field.

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