



Benefits of Facilitating the Second Year Practicum Experience for the Health Information Management Program

Hosting a practicum placement in any profession provides valuable learning opportunities for both students of the program, and the employees of the sites who offer this experience. Acting as a preceptor for a practicum student often reminds employees of why they chose that field of work, and can create opportunities for reflection as students inquire about site processes and organizational policies and procedures. It also allows employees to act as mentors to those who will soon be graduating and entering their chosen profession, allowing the student to gain confidence and trust in their skills.

In the Health Information Management (HIM) program at SAIT, students are required to complete two such un-paid practicum experiences. In the second year, the practicum is an opportunity to complete their learning cycle by applying classroom theory to entry-to-practice skills in a supervised, supportive setting. By the time of this second practicum, HIM students have met learning outcomes in the four domains of practice of the HIM profession as stated by the Canadian Health Information Management Association (CHIMA) of privacy, data quality, e-HIM™ (electronic health information management), and HIM standards. They can be valuable contributors to projects you may have in the following areas:

- Data analysis, including chart audits for data quality and statistical analysis of patient activity
- Electronic Health Record standards and initiatives
- Research design and methodology
- Privacy, including evaluation for compliance with legislation, assessment of patient information requests, and privacy impact assessment
- Data classification, including coding and abstracting of patient charts
- Quality improvement, including utilization management and risk management initiatives
- Database design and management (Microsoft Access and Oracle SQL) to facilitate analysis
- Project management, team building, and leadership
- Chart management initiatives

Providing a placement for a HIM student who is soon to be entering the field is a great way for your employees to provide mentoring opportunities and help prepare new grads to enter the field. Perhaps you have a project you have wanted to complete related to the above skill areas, and providing a project for a practicum student could benefit both your organization and the student. If you may be able to support a second year HIM student for their practicum experience, please contact either Stephanie Clack (stephanie.clack@sait.ca) or Lisa Proudfoot (lisa.proudfoot@sait.ca) and we would be happy to provide you with more details.