

**HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT - ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021**

**Time: 5:30-7:00pm \* Zoom Online**

**Members Present**: Jacob Salzer CPC (Committee Chair), Legacy Health; Merryl Blatnik (Vice Chair), Columbia River Mental Health Services; April Andrews, Columbia River Mental Health Services; Manuel Galaviz MD, PeaceHealth SW Medical Center; Lori Lucente CTR, Providence Portland Medical Center; Sean Moore, Workforce SW; Chasity Palacios, Northwest Urology, LLC

**Members Absent**: Julie McKim, Kaiser Permanente NW; Virdie Schrei RHIT, Providence Health & Services;

**Clark College**: Olga Lyubar, Instructor; Mengistu Hika, Instructor; Carmen Lilly, Advising; Brenda Walstead, Dean – Business and HEOC; Sarah Kuzera, Director of Medical Assisting; SueAnn McWatters, Program Specialist – Advisory Committees

Jacob Salzer called the meeting to order at 5:35pm and introductions were made.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes for *May 12th, 2021* were presented for approval. Jacob Salzer motioned to approve. Merryl Blatnik seconded and was unanimously approved.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The committee selected their next meeting date for **Wednesday, February 16th, 2022 at 5:30pm.**

**ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**

Chasity Palacios and Merryl Blatnik volunteered.

**Jacob Salzer made a motion for Chasity Palacios to as Chair and Merryl Blatnik to act as Vice Chair. Lori Lucente seconded and was unanimously approved.**

**OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Brenda Walstead made the following announcements:

The college has hired a new Vice President of Instruction. His name is Paul Wickline.

During fall, it was required that faculty and staff be vaccinated. Starting winter, the college will be a fully vaccinated campus, including students. We do except exemptions (religious and medical) other than the healthcare programs. Students can get a one-year deferment to accommodate certain exemptions.

**CANCER REGISTRY COURSES AND OUTCOMES**

Olga Lyubar presented the program map and also asked the committee to think about specific outcomes for the Certificate of Proficiency. The prerequisites for the courses are identical to the ones that are being taken by HIM and Medical Billing and Coding. There are three tracks that the accrediting body approves for the CTR Cancer Registry.

1. Associates degree in the Cancer Registry
2. A Certificate
3. Having an Associates degree in biology associated with/including at least 1950 hours in the Cancer Registry and then taking the CTR exam.

Clark is trying to take the second path with students taking a 60+ credit load, which is a certificate in the Cancer Registry. Students would then complete a clinical practice and then sit in for the CTR exam. They would also have to maintain their CEUs.

There are six main courses that encompass the CTR exam and the clinical practicum. Olga asked for help to make sure the credit load is properly distributed.

Lori Lucente agreed to have some separate conversations with Olga to look at the courses and to envision out the program. The biggest problem for CTRs is that they go through school however the quality of the instruction on how to abstract isn’t always there. Finding instructors that are in the field that train/instruct is important.

Olga also asked for recommendations on what kind of technology might be needed for these specific courses. Lori responded saying that many facilities use EPIC for their medical records.

Jacob Salzer spoke about the practicum and asked about companies possibly being interested. Compass Oncology is a local business that he suggested might be a great partner. Lori stated that abstractors like Compass Oncology, they don’t have a registry. They might just report to the state. It is mostly going through the hospital. OHSU has a small practicum set up. Providence is hoping to open it up to students in the future. Merryl Blatnik asked about looking into other states for practicums. Brenda Walstead stated that Clark has an agreement with Oregon, but she would have to do more research to see how it would work out to include other states.

Olga explained that this program would be fully online so there is potential. There could be a bigger pool of applicants.

Dr. Manuel Galaviz asked if this curriculum compares to other curriculums in the college system. Olga responded saying that this is very similar. The courses are comparable. It will need to be accredited.

The credits to vary. Some colleges will raise the credits on the courses, however some colleges have them very low.

The goal is to run this program like a cohort. The Allied Health courses will be available at any time. The HIM courses will be a bit more limited and specific to a certain time. Olga went with the CP is to try and sell it with the HIM program. This would target to different students: those that already have an associates and are already in healthcare and want to go into cancer registry and the other group are those that are in the HIM field but their desire is to pursue a cancer field career. Students would need an associate’s before applying into the CP for Cancer Registry.

Jacob asked if you are required to be certified in order to become a cancer registrar. Is there a way to have an entry level position without passing? Lori stated that you can, but you are not able to abstract. Follow-up, potentially case finding, but you would not be allowed to abstract and submit those abstracts. There is a big shortage, so they will bring candidates in at entry level and then train them to sit for the CTR exam.

**DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

*Student Enrollment and News*

There are only two students left from the old program. The will all finish out by the end of the academic year. The teach out group of students will be done. There were 11 students in the directed practicum. There are 7 that have been hired. A few of them got job offers, but they did not accept them. There are a lot of job availabilities. Many of them ended up getting jobs in the medical billing field. One of the students was hired in the patient access. And another student was asked to run a new chiropractic clinic, however they decided to only do part-time.

*Full-Time Faculty*

Olga introduced Mengistu Hika, the new full-time faculty member with HIM. His background is very diverse with HIM. He’s worked in computer science, healthcare system, nursing and pharmacy. He has recently been working in industry in the hospital as a child director of coding, even as a management policy sheriff. He was also teaching at the same time.

*Move to WSU Vancouver*

The program has finally moved to CCW (Clark College at WSU Vancouver). The program is still fully online; however, the base and placement will be at the WSU Vancouver campus. The goal is to collaborate with the Medical Assistant, Nursing, Pharmacy and Phlebotomy to create community outreach and new types of marketing.

*2nd Cohort*

Currently, there are a good turnout of applicants; approximately 39 open applicants. 29 of them are interested in the associates and 10 are interested in the Certificate of Proficiency. Last year, the program combined the programs together for the first three terms in order to combat low class enrollment. The hope is that this spring will have a split in the pathways. Olga asked the committee to think about internships as they will need placements.

**INDUSTRY UPDATES**

Jacob Salzer spoke on a colleague reaching out to start teaching coding. She will be reaching out soon. The patient access managers at legacy were supposed to connect with Olga Lyubar and he wanted to make sure that they did. They did have a meeting and talk. They were looking at doing a noncredit side of patient access.

Merryl Blatnik stated that the CCP HC accreditation occurred at her organization. It serves those with serious mental illness or severe emotional disorders. It is a grant funded program to ideally help those with no insurance. It is very new, so it is hard to find reliable resources to consult with. She also spoke on the behavioral health coding portion. Some of their services are still working off of COVID waiver forms to be able to provide them remotely by either audio/visual or telephone.

Chasity Palacios explained that there might be updates for their coverages. She stated that Pacific sources are updating to continue to cover telehealth services, potentially outside of the public health emergency. Most are continuing through the end of the year.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.

Prepared by SueAnn McWatters