

Medical Biller

Job Description:

Medical billers record patient charges, prepare billing statements, and record receipt of payments. Medical billing today is highly computerized and so billers can work in a variety of settings and transmit their work electronically to distant locations. Billers must understand medical terminology because patient records include medical language.

Billers work in hospitals, clinics, and physicians' offices. They are also employed by billing services. Some experienced billers are self-employed and work from their homes. A key issue still being addressed in this area is patient confidentiality. The biller who works off-site must have a confidential way to retrieve patient information. This can be done via a direct link to the medical provider's office, over a secured fax line, through the mail, or over the Internet as an encrypted message.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Input patient information into the billing system.
- Enter charges for each office visit and procedure.
- Transmit electronic statements or prepare paper statements.
- Print and mail paper statements to the patients.
- Post payments received from insurance carriers and patients.
- Answer calls regarding questions about billings.
- Follow up on any unpaid claims.

Personal Qualities:

Medical billers must have a high level of accuracy and attention to detail. They must be able to sit for long periods of time and block out environmental distractions. They must be self-disciplined and able to work independently. To maintain good customer relations, good communication skills are required to answer questions or clarify information about billing processes for clients.

Physical Requirements

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Medical billing is not physically demanding, but sitting for long periods while billing can be tiring for some people and can result in back, neck, and eye strain. Repetitive motion injuries of the wrist, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, are a risk when working at the computer for hours at a time.

Educational Requirements:

There are no specific educational standards for medical billers. Most employers are looking for employees who are either experienced or have received some training from a community or vocational college. Courses that are highly recommended to prepare for a career as a medical biller are anatomy, physiology, medical terminology, medical legal issues, front office procedures, health insurance, and bookkeeping.

Certification Requirements:

Voluntary certification is offered by a number of organizations, such as the Medical Association of Billers (MAB), the American Medical Billers Association (AMBA), and the American Association of Medical Billers (AAMB).

Projected Outlook for this Career:

Medical billing is one of the fastest growing occupations in health care. More time and money is being spent by the government and insurance companies to research and prevent claims fraud, abusive practices, and questions regarding medical necessity. The increasing use of medical services by the growing aging population is also contributing to this growth.

Salary Information:

In 2004, the average annual income for medical billers was \$29,040.

Career Ladders:

Medical billers can advance to supervisory positions, start their own home-based business, do consulting, or teach medical billing. Additional training prepares them to be insurance coders. (See the profile for insurance coder for more information.)

To Learn More and Prepare:

- Obtain information from the Medical Association of Billers (MAB).
- Explore the Web Links provided in this profile.
- Conduct an informational interview or job shadow a medical biller.
- Obtain employment or a volunteer position in a health care facility to facilitate learning medical terminology.
- In high school, take science, computer, typing, and word processing classes.
- Contact medical billing programs for information about their admission requirements and courses of study.

Professional Organizations:

Medical Association of Billers (MAB)
2441 Tech Center Court
Suite 110
Las Vegas, NV 89128
(702) 240-8519
<http://www.physicianswebsites.com/>

Web Links:

Medical Billers - Job Listing
Lists job openings for medical billers.
<http://www.medical.biller.jobs.com/>

Billers.com
View the slide presentation entitled "Medical Billing: A Career Choice."
<http://www.billers.com/>

Jobvertise
Type "Medical Biller" into the Search field and click "Search Jobs." Contains job listings by city and state.
<http://www.jobvertise.com/>