

"YOU'RE CERTIFIED... NOW WHAT?"

Navigating the Next Steps After Earning Your CPC



Presented by:
Keisha Wilson CCS, CPC, CPCO, CPMA, CRC, CPB, AAPC Approved Instructor
KW Advanced Consulting

MEET THE SPEAKER



Keisha Wilson

CCS, CPC, CPCO, CPMA, CRC, CPB, AAPC Approved Instructor

Founder/CEO of KW Advanced Consulting, Minority Women Owned Business Enterprise/M/WBE Certified. Keisha is a national and regional conference speaker on compliance and coding matters. Keisha has worked in the healthcare field for over 20+ years, specializing in various areas of revenue cycle and compliance, focusing on retrospective, prospective, Evaluation and Management audits. As well as auditing and coding of multi-specialty, documentation, and coding Telehealth/Telemedicine services, Risk Adjustment/HCC provider and coder education/training and webinars.

Keisha currently sits on a Board of Directors for an outpatient mental health clinic. Collaborate with the AAPC editors on various Primary Care Coding Alert articles and Healthcare Business Monthly.

DISCLAIMER

This webinar/presentation is intended solely to provide information to the public. The presentation was current when it was published and provided via webinar. It is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information on the subject covered. The information provided in this webinar is a general overview and should not be relied on as medical, legal, financial, or other professional advice. It is not intended to take the place of either written policies or regulations. KW Advanced Consulting encourages participants to review guidelines, rules and other essential coding materials.

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AGENDA

Meaning of Having
Your CPC

Understanding Your
Certification &
Career Pathways

Gaining Practical
Experience

Networking &
Professional
Development

Strengthening Skills
& Specializing

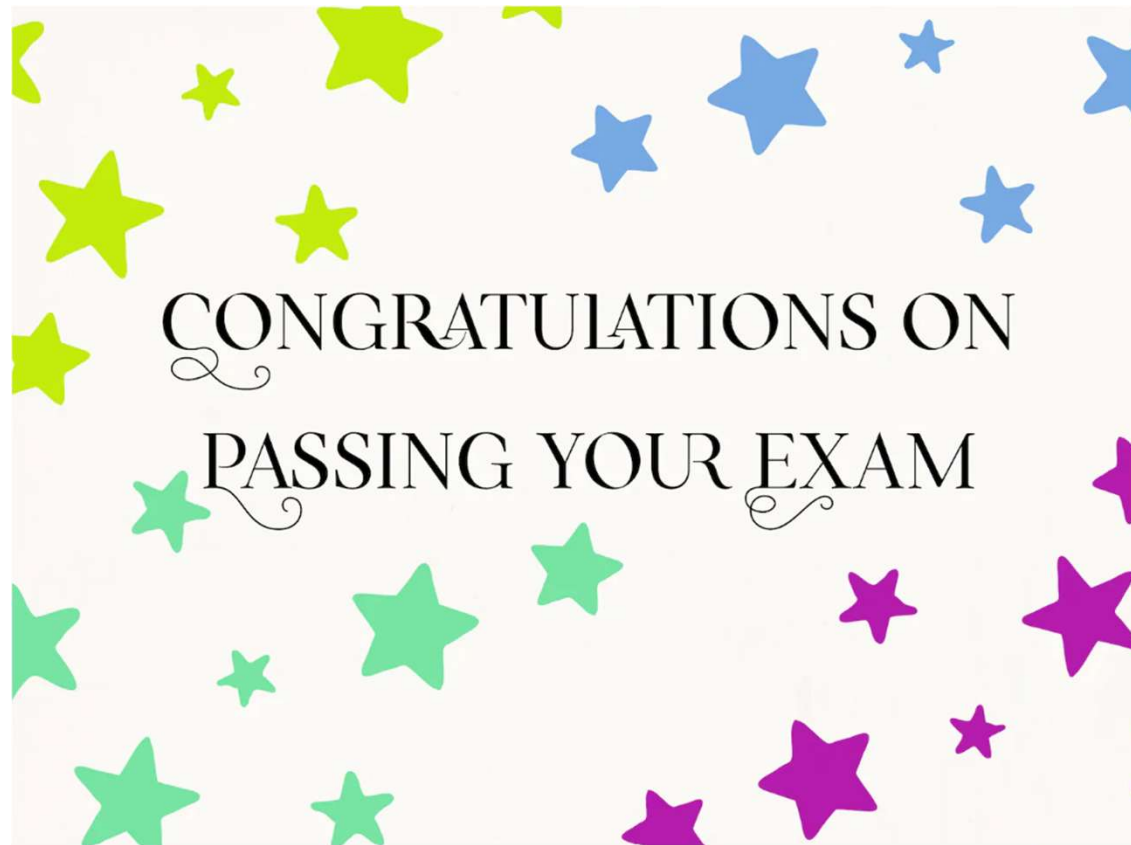
Building Your
Resume & Job
Search Strategies

Understanding
Employer
Expectations

Staying Current with
Coding Guidelines

Long-Term Career
Growth & Next
Steps

CONGRATULATIONS

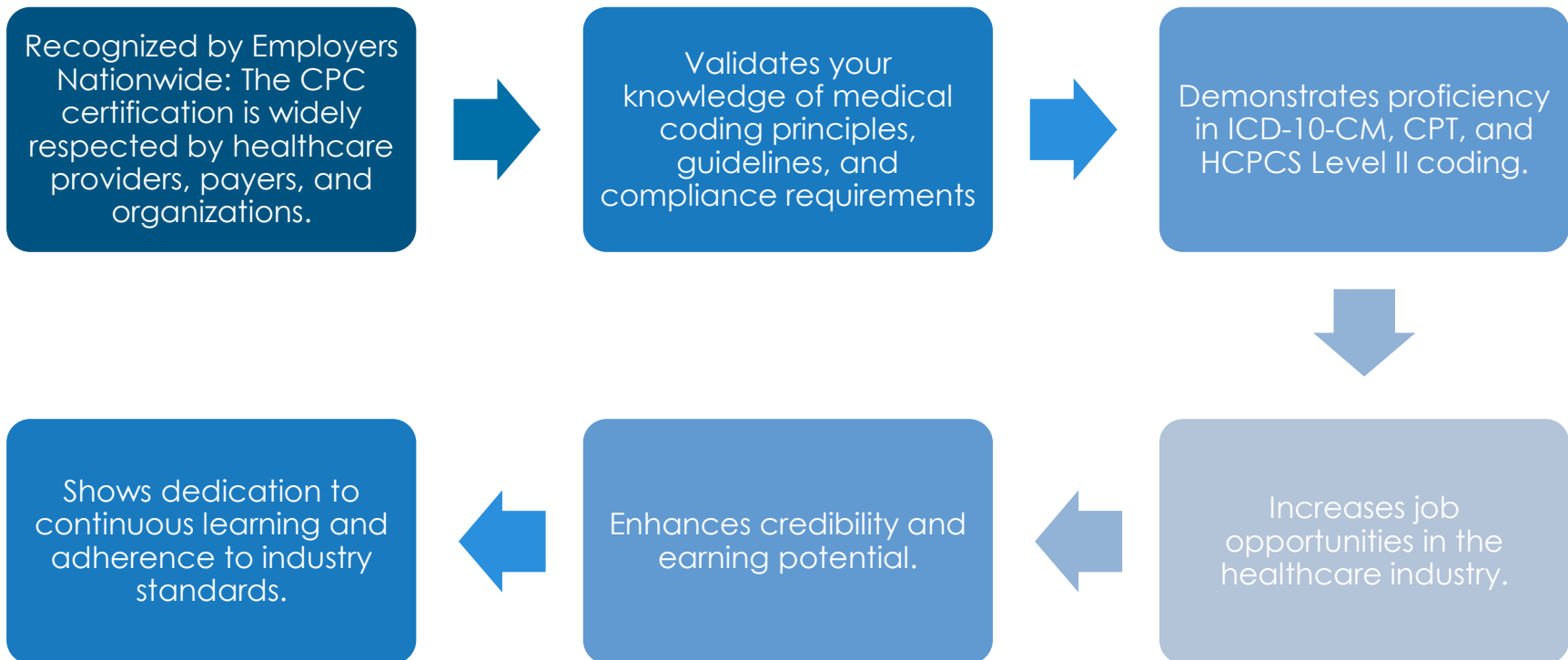


**"YOU'RE CERTIFIED... NOW
WHAT?"**

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INDUSTRIES & SETTINGS WHERE CPC'S WORK



INDUSTRIES & SETTINGS WHERE CPC MAY WORK

- ☐ Physician Offices and Clinics
- ☐ Hospitals and Health Systems
- ☐ Insurance Companies (Payers)
- ☐ Government Agencies
(Medicare/Medicaid)
- ☐ Revenue Cycle Management (RCM)
Companies
- ☐ Healthcare Compliance and
Consulting
- ☐ Telehealth and Remote Coding
Opportunities



INDUSTRIES & SETTINGS WHERE CPC MAY WORK

- ❑ Medical Coder: In hospitals, clinics, physician offices
- ❑ Billing Specialist: For healthcare providers or billing companies
- ❑ Auditing: Compliance and revenue integrity roles
- ❑ Practice Management: Overseeing operations in healthcare settings
- ❑ Education: Training and mentoring other coders
- ❑ Entrepreneurship: Starting your own coding or consulting business



IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH IN CAREER GROWTH

- ❑ Researching Before Pursuing Your Next Certification
- ❑ Understand industry demand and job market trends.
- ❑ Ensure the certification aligns with your career goals.
- ❑ Assess the cost, time commitment, and job prospects.
- ❑ Speak to industry professionals and mentors.



RESEARCHING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- ❑ Look beyond job titles—read job descriptions carefully.
- ❑ Research employers to find the right fit.
- ❑ Understand salary expectations and career growth potential.
- ❑ Network to gain insights into hidden job opportunities.

4 ways to approach this interview question

- ✓ Get a sense of salary expectations
- ✓ Justify your range
- ✓ Share any competing offers
- ✓ Keep it to the end of the interview

4 common mistakes to avoid

- ✗ Give a fixed amount
- ✗ Sell yourself short
- ✗ Overprice yourself
- ✗ Disclose current salary

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES & FIRST CODING ROLE

- ❑ How to Position Yourself for Entry-Level Roles
- ❑ Resume & Cover Letter Tips for Medical Coders
- ❑ Where to Look for Jobs (LinkedIn, AAPC, Indeed, Networking)
- ❑ Remote vs. In-Person Work Opportunities
- ❑ Importance of Practicode & Internships

GENERAL JOB BOARDS



HEALTHCARE & CODING-SPECIFIC JOB BOARDS



AAPC Job Board – Exclusive for AAPC members.

AHIMA Career Center – Ideal for inpatient coding roles.

HIMSS JobMine – Focuses on health information management jobs.

REMOTE & CONTRACT WORK



APPLY SMARTLY & STRATEGICALLY

Entry-Level & Stepping Stone Jobs

- ☐ Medical Coding Associate
- ☐ Medical Billing Specialist
- ☐ Prior Authorization Specialist
- ☐ Claims Processor
- ☐ Revenue Cycle Representative

Reach Out to Recruiters on LinkedIn – Message HR reps from companies hiring coders.



APPLY SMARTLY & STRATEGICALLY

AAPC Certifications

- Are often preferred for outpatient settings, private practices, and physician coding roles.

AHIMA Certifications

- Are often required for hospital inpatient coding, HIM leadership, and data analytics.

YOUR RESUME

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGY & RESUME TIPS FOR MEDICAL CODERS

Optimize Your Resume for Medical Coding Jobs

- ❑ **Highlight Your CPC Certification** – Put "Certified Professional Coder (CPC)" at the top under your name.
- ❑ **Showcase Practical Experience** – Even if you're newly certified, include:
 - ❑ Practicode completion
 - ❑ Internships or volunteer coding work
 - ❑ Any relevant healthcare experience (billing, claims, front desk, etc.)
- ❑ **List Key Skills** – Use job-related keywords:
 - ❑ ICD-10-CM, CPT, HCPCS, Modifiers
 - ❑ E/M coding, risk adjustment, denials & appeals
 - ❑ Compliance & medical necessity documentation
- ❑ **Keep It Clean & Professional** – One page (two if necessary), no fancy fonts.
 - ❑ LinkedIn Profile – Update job title to Certified Professional Coder (CPC) | Medical Billing & Coding to increase visibility.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGY & RESUME TIPS FOR MEDICAL CODERS

Highlight Your CPC Certification



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Approved Instructor**

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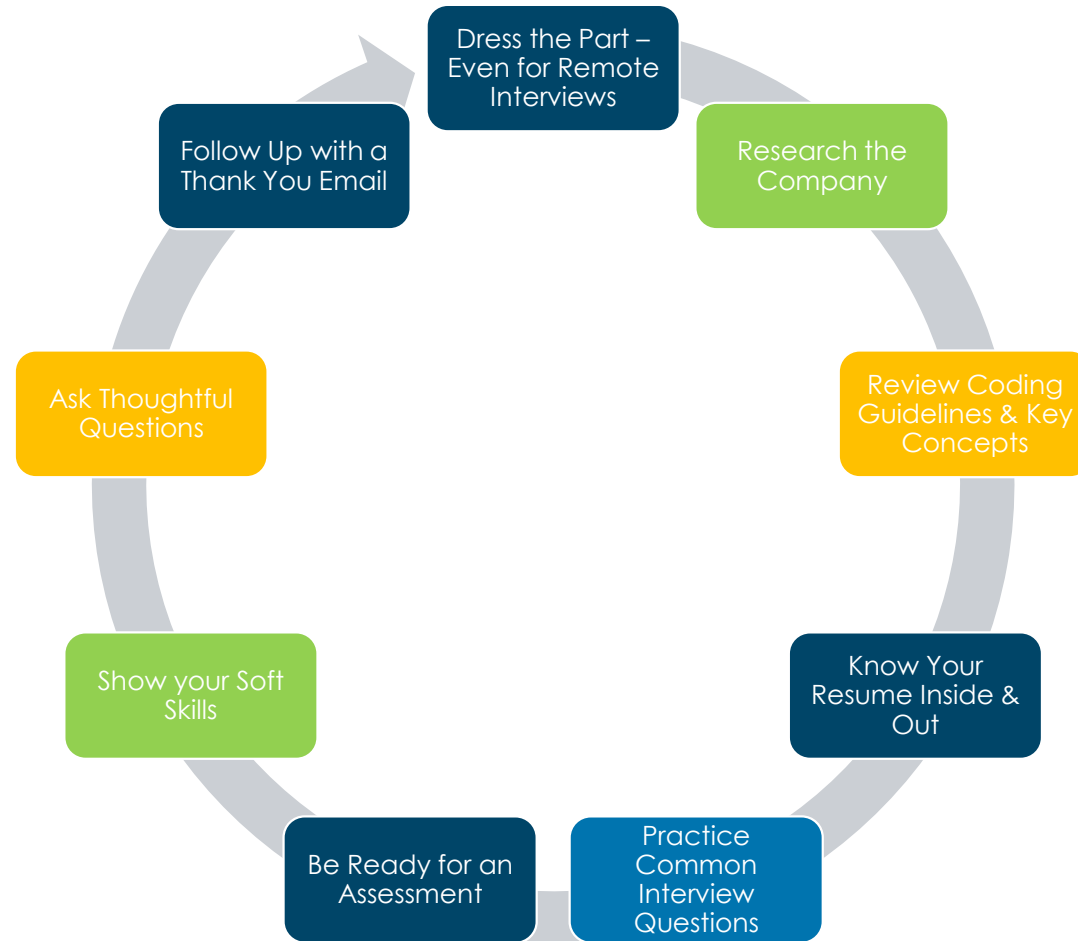
**MEDICAL CODING SPECIALIST | CERTIFIED CODING SPECIALIST | CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL COMPLIANCE
OFFICER | CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL CODER | CERTIFIED RISK ADJUSTMENT CODER | CERTIFIED
PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL AUDITOR | CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL BILLER | AAPC APPROVED INSTRUCTOR**

APPLY SMARTLY & STRATEGICALLY

Best Places to Apply

- ☐ **Healthcare Systems & Hospitals** – Large facilities often train new coders.
- ☐ **Billing & Coding Companies** –Omega Healthcare, RCM firms, ext.
- ☐ **Insurance Companies** – UnitedHealthcare, Humana, Aetna, etc.
- ☐ **Physician Offices & Clinics** – Local practices, specialty clinics.
- ☐ **Remote-Friendly Employers** – Optum, Maxim etc.
- ☐ **Set Job Alerts** – Indeed, LinkedIn, and ZipRecruiter allow keyword alerts for “CPC-A” or “Entry-Level Medical Coder.”

TOP TIPS FOR CODERS PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW



GO IN PERSON



IMPACT OF MULTIPLE CERTIFICATIONS ON SALARY

Certified vs. Non-Certified Coders:

- Certified medical records specialists earn an average of \$66,186 annually, which is 8.5% more than their non-certified counterparts, who average \$61,022 per year.

Specialized Certifications:

- Certified Coding Specialist (CCS): Professionals with this certification, particularly those working in acute care hospitals, have a median salary of around \$62,000 annually.
- Certified Risk Adjustment Coder (CRC): This specialization averages salaries of over \$62,500 per year.

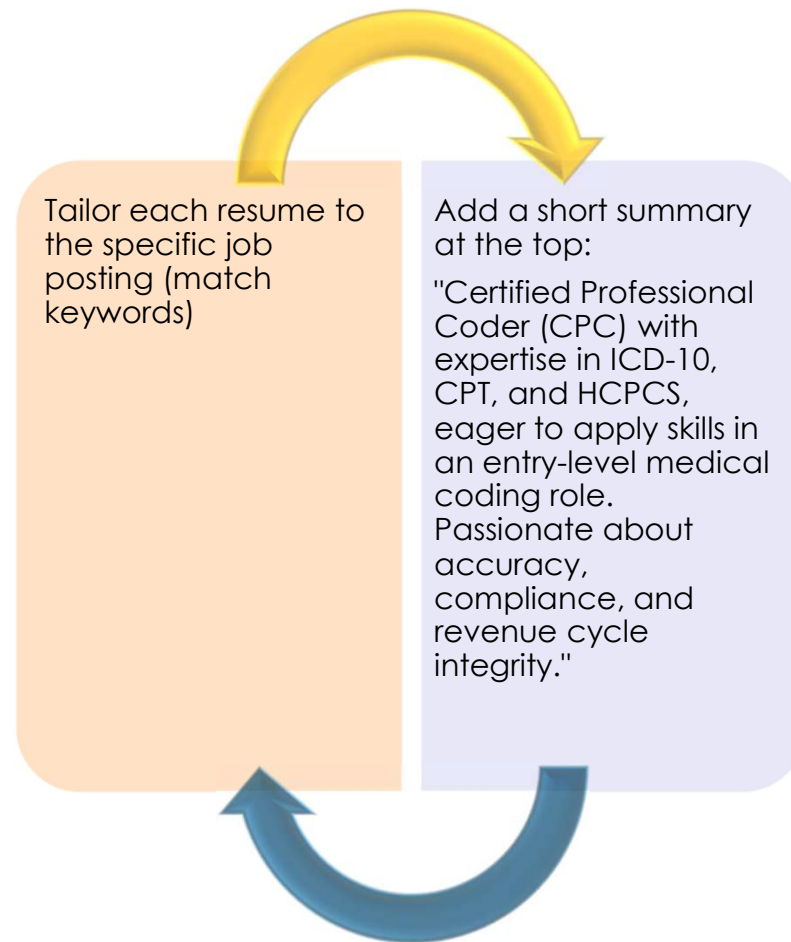
Experience and Additional Credentials:

- Gaining experience and obtaining additional credentials can lead to higher positions and salaries. For example, roles such as Coding Director or Coding Manager can have salary ranges between \$44,500 and \$122,000 per year, depending on the position and experience level.

NETWORK & GAIN EXPERIENCE

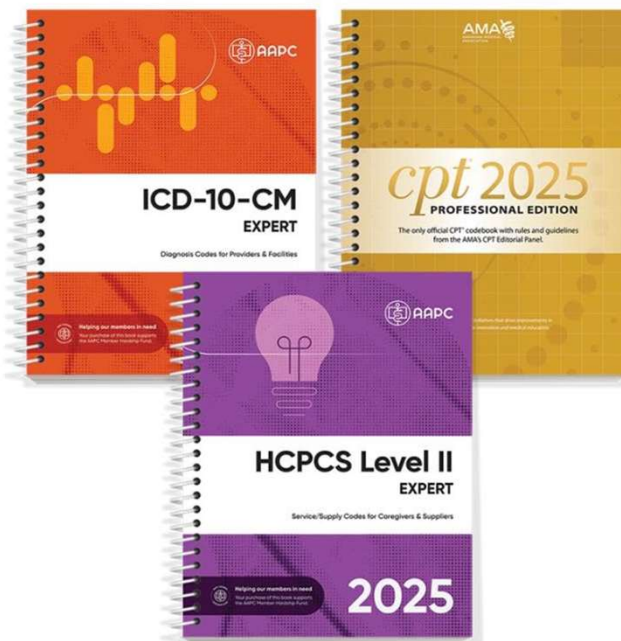
- ☐ **Join AAPC Local Chapters** – Attend meetings, find mentors, and hear about job openings.
- ☐ **Volunteer** – Offer coding assistance for non-profits, free clinics, or local providers.
- ☐ **Internships & Apprenticeships** – Check with AAPC, AHIMA, or local hospitals for coding programs.
- ☐ **Keep Learning** – Consider a **specialty certification** (CRC, CPMA, CPB, ext.) to stand out.

NETWORK & GAIN EXPERIENCE



WHY STAYING UPDATED ON CODING CHANGES IS ESSENTIAL

- ❑ The medical coding and compliance landscape is constantly evolving, with regular updates to coding guidelines, regulations, and payer policies.



WHY STAYING UPDATED ON CODING CHANGES IS ESSENTIAL

- ❑ Staying informed and maintaining your credentials through Continuing Education Units (CEUs) is not just a requirement—it is a critical component of your professional success.
- ❑ AAPC - To maintain a Certified Professional Coder (CPC) credential, you need to earn 36 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) every two years.
- ❑ All require members to earn CEUs to maintain their certifications. These CEUs ensure that professionals stay current with the latest industry changes, preventing errors in coding and compliance.

CEU's

CEUs Required to Maintain Credential(s)

Number of Certifications:

See below for specific credential requirements:

One Certification:

36 CEUs every two years

Two Certifications:

40 CEUs every two years

Three Certifications:

44 CEUs every two years

Four Certifications:

48 CEUs every two years

Five or More Certifications:

52 CEUs every two years

CONTINUING EDUCATION & CAREER ADVANCEMENT

- ❑ **Regulatory Compliance** – The healthcare industry is heavily regulated, and failure to stay updated could lead to compliance violations, audits, or claim denials.
- ❑ **Accurate Reimbursement** – Keeping up with new codes and policies ensures that claims are processed correctly, avoiding revenue loss for providers.
- ❑ **Professional Growth** – Employers seek coders who stay informed. By regularly updating your knowledge, you remain competitive in the field.
- ❑ **Adaptation to Industry Changes** – CPT, ICD-10, and HCPCS updates occur annually. CEUs help coders stay ahead of these revisions to minimize billing errors.
- ❑ **Ethical Responsibility** – As a coding professional, you play a vital role in healthcare integrity. Staying updated ensures ethical and compliant coding practices.

CONTINUING EDUCATION & CAREER ADVANCEMENT



Essential Resource Page

Official Government & Regulatory Resources

1. **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** – <https://www.cms.gov>
 - o The go-to source for Medicare policies, coverage guidelines, and fee schedules.
2. **Medicare Learning Network (MLN)** – <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN>
 - o Free educational materials, including coding updates, billing guidelines, and compliance tips.
3. **Office of Inspector General (OIG) Compliance Resources** – <https://oig.hhs.gov/compliance/>
 - o Work plans, fraud alerts, and compliance guidance for healthcare providers and coders.
4. **National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) Edits** – <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/NationalCorrectCodInitEd>
 - o Helps avoid incorrect coding combinations and ensures proper claim submission.
5. **Local Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs)** – <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/Medicare-Administrative-Contractors>
 - o Find your region's MAC for local coverage determinations (LCDs), fee schedules, and guidance.
6. **HIPAA & HITECH Act Guidelines** – <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa>
 - o Regulations on patient privacy, security, and electronic transactions.

Coding & Reimbursement Resources

7. **Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) - AMA** – <https://www.ama-assn.org/amaone/cpt-current-procedural-terminology>

OTHER CERTIFICATIONS

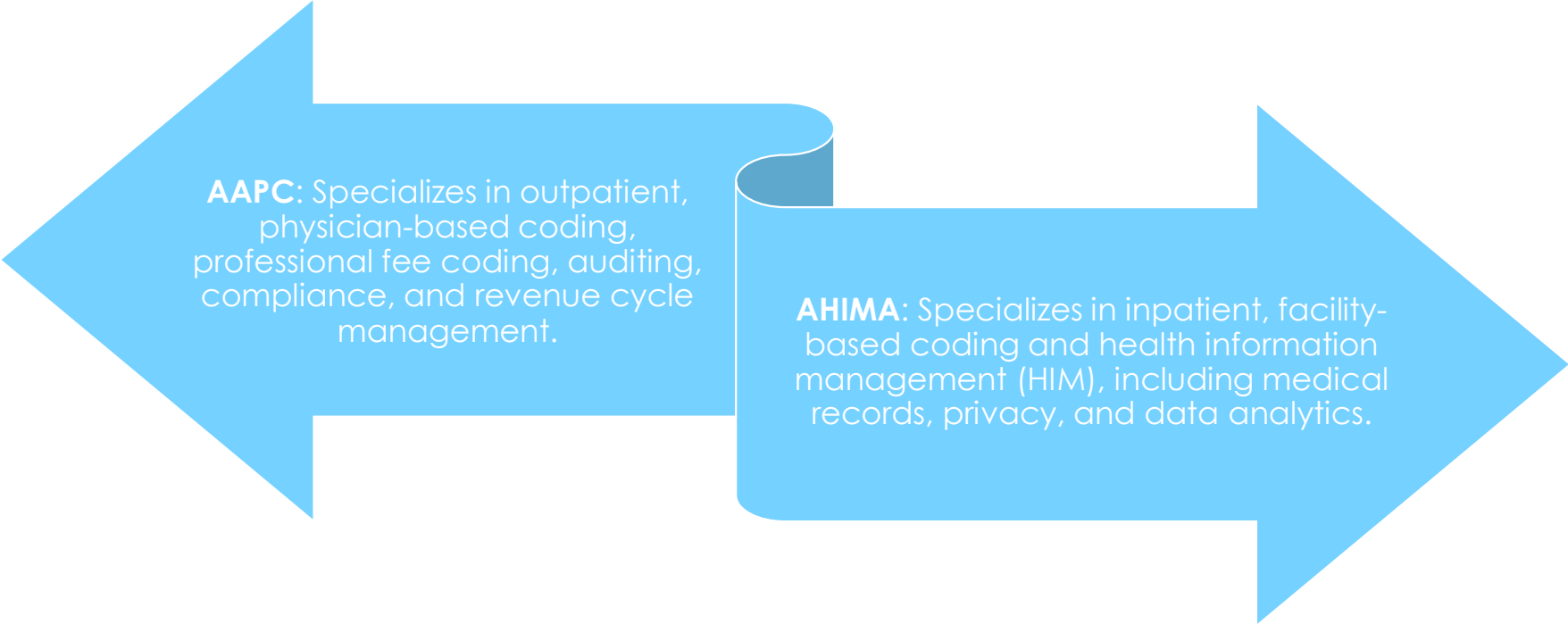
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HOT TOPICS IN CODING

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Coding	Increased focus on Z codes and risk adjustment for better patient care and reimbursement.
Critical Care Services	Proper documentation and coding challenges, including split/shared visits and time-based reporting.
Behavioral Health Coding	Growth in mental health services, including new CPT codes for prolonged services and digital interventions.
Telehealth Updates	2024 final rule changes, reimbursement policies, and the future of remote patient monitoring.
Evaluation & Management (E/M) Updates	Ongoing refinements to 2023 E/M changes, including split/shared billing and medical decision-making (MDM) guidelines.
Risk Adjustment & HCC Coding	Ensuring accurate documentation and compliance with CMS-HCC model changes.
Emergency & Observation Services	Proper coding for extended stays, hospital outpatient observation, and critical care time tracking.
Surgical Modifiers & Global Period Challenges	Ensuring correct usage of modifiers (e.g., 24, 25, 57) and global period compliance.
Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Coding & Auditing	How AI is shaping medical coding accuracy and fraud detection.
Chronic Care Management (CCM) & Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM)	Expanding opportunities for coding and billing non-face-to-face services.

AAPC vs AHIMA



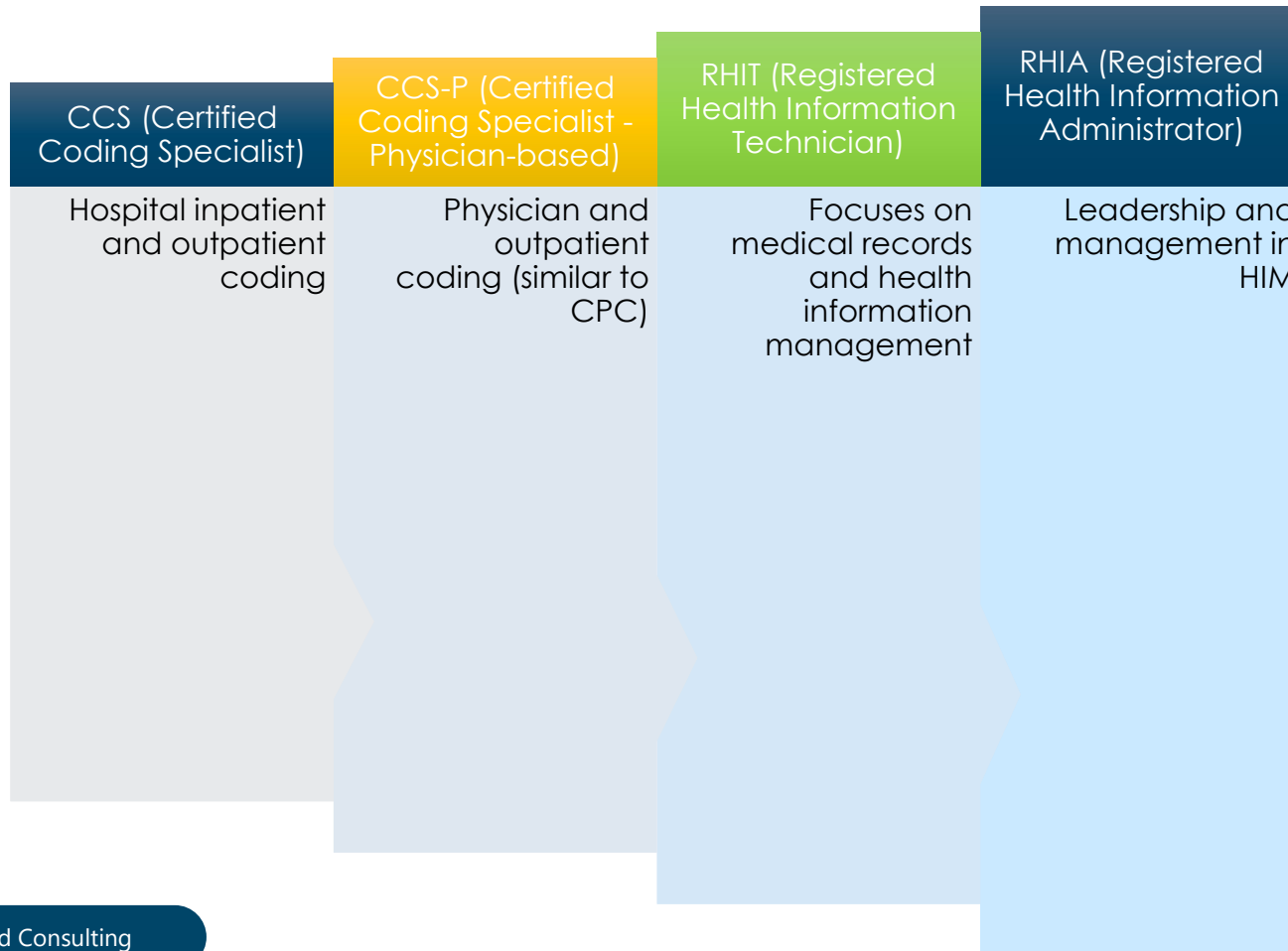
AAPC: Specializes in outpatient, physician-based coding, professional fee coding, auditing, compliance, and revenue cycle management.

AHIMA: Specializes in inpatient, facility-based coding and health information management (HIM), including medical records, privacy, and data analytics.

AAPC CERTIFICATIONS

CPC (Certified Professional Coder)	CRC (Certified Risk Adjustment Coder)	CPMA (Certified Professional Medical Auditor)	CPB (Certified Professional Biller)	CDEO, CIC, and other specialty credentials
Physician-based coding for outpatient settings	Focuses on risk adjustment and chronic condition coding	Medical auditing and compliance	medical billing processes, revenue cycle management, and reimbursement methodologies	Emphasizes documentation quality and compliance for outpatient services. Various specialty certifications for those who want to deepen their expertise in fields like anesthesia, cardiology, and inpatient coding.

AHIMA CERTIFICATIONS



HCCA CERTIFICATIONS

CCB's healthcare compliance certifications



**Certified in
Healthcare
Compliance
(CHC)**

*For healthcare
compliance
professionals of all
levels*

**Learn
More**



**Certified in
Healthcare
Privacy
Compliance
(CHPC)**

*For healthcare
compliance
professionals of all
levels specializing in
healthcare privacy*

**Learn
More**

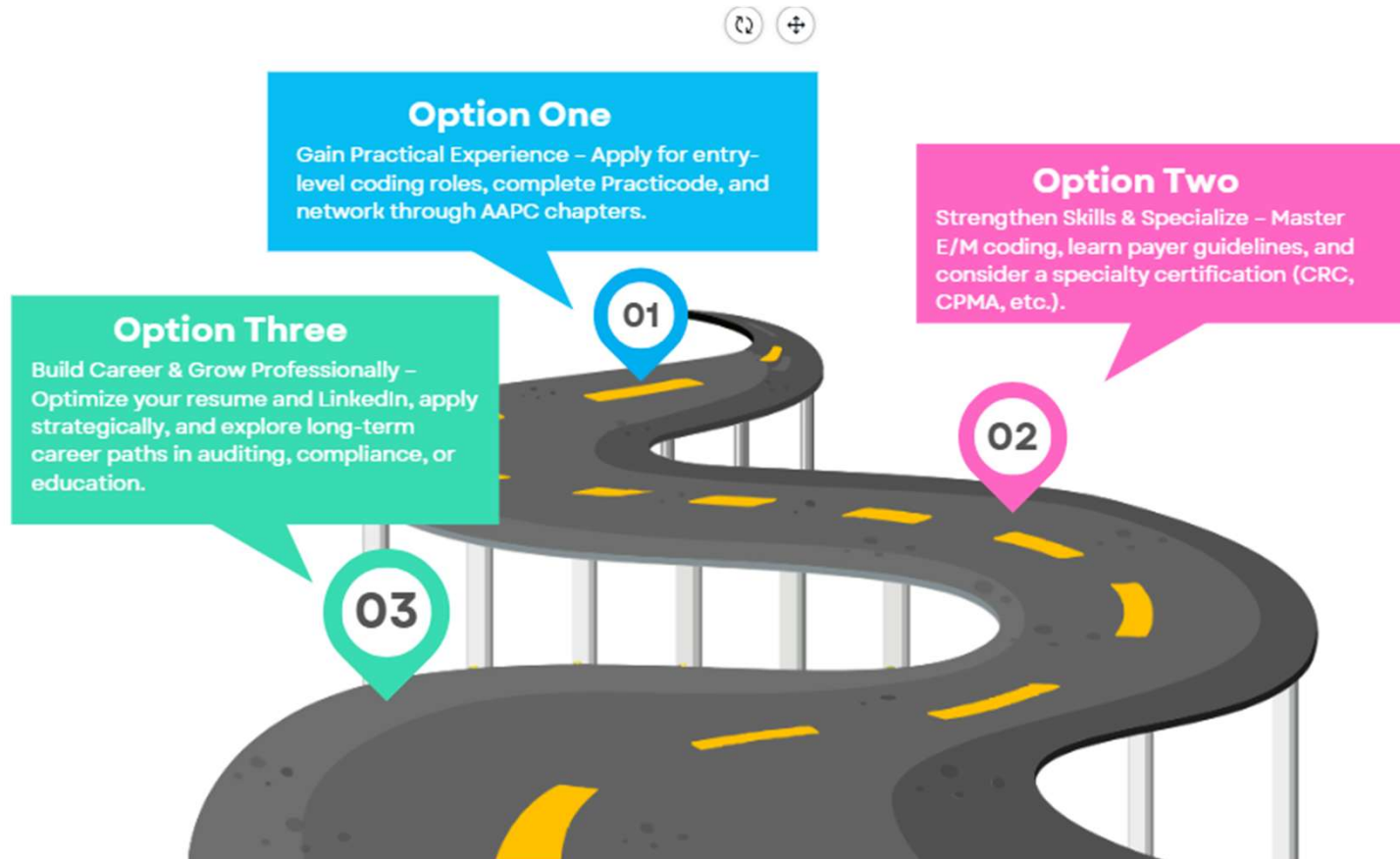


**Certified in
Healthcare
Research
Compliance
(CHRC)**

*For healthcare
compliance
professionals of all
levels specializing in
healthcare research*

**Learn
More**

THE ROAD TO TRAVEL



SETTING CAREER GOALS



WRITE THE VISION, MAKE IT PLAIN

Write the Vision, Make It Plain: The Importance of Writing Down Your Goals in Your Coding Career

In the fast-paced and evolving field of medical coding, having a clear vision for your career is essential. Writing down your goals not only provides direction but also serves as a roadmap to success.

Why Writing Down Your Goals Matters **Clarity and Focus**

- ❑ Defining your career path in coding—whether it's obtaining a CPC certification, specializing in risk adjustment, or becoming a compliance auditor—helps you stay focused and intentional in your efforts.

Accountability and Motivation

- ❑ When you write down your goals, they become more real. It serves as a daily reminder of what you're working toward, keeping you accountable and motivated.

WRITE THE VISION, MAKE IT PLAIN

Tracking Progress

- ❑ Documenting your milestones—such as completing training, passing certification exams, or landing a coding job—helps you measure progress and adjust your plan as needed.

Overcoming Challenges

- ❑ The coding field can be challenging, with evolving regulations and the need for continuous learning. Having a written vision allows you to push through setbacks with resilience, knowing you have a clear goal ahead.



WRITE THE VISION, MAKE IT PLAIN

How to Write Your Vision for Your Coding Career

☐ **Start with Your Long-Term Goal**

Example: "I will become a certified medical auditor (CPMA) within the next two years and transition into compliance auditing."

☐ **Break It Down into Actionable Steps**

- ☐ Complete CPC certification.
- ☐ Gain 1-2 years of hands-on coding experience.
- ☐ Enroll in a CPMA preparation course.
- ☐ Take and pass the CPMA exam.
- ☐ Apply for compliance auditing roles.

☐ **Review and Adjust as Needed**

- ☐ Revisit your vision regularly and make necessary adjustments based on industry trends, new interests, or additional certifications you may want to pursue.

DON'T COMPARE

**DON'T
COMPARE
YOURSELF
TO OTHERS
—
BE YOUR
OWN
COMPETITION**

**DON'T COMPARE
YOURSELF
TO OTHERS,
BUT COMPARE
TO YOUR
PREVIOUS SELF.**

RESOURCES

https://www.indeed.com/hire/job-description/medical-coder?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiArKW-BhAzEiwAZhWslKijvLoFFyuPX8lAalf7cF6M9dSXrwErKMKzlULHcblhUw8Q1EBdBhoC--4QAvD_BwE&aceid=&gclsrc=aw.ds

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm>

https://www.aapc.com/medical-coding-education/help/?srsltid=AfmBOoogFDVg4C-gAeKXC5ivhvLKP7lyCe9PkGxb3DENp7_ZSMd1QruT

<https://www.cms.gov/training-education/medicare-learning-network/resources-training>

<https://www.ahima.org/certification-careers/certifications-overview/>

<https://www.aapc.com/certifications>

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- ✓ MEDICAL RECORD DOCUMENTATION AND MUCH MORE....

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Coder Preparation

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- Documentation Guidelines and Resources
- Mock Exam Questions & More...

4 hours 4 CEUs

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Zoom

2025 WITH KW ADVANCED CONSULTING

I'm speaking at
HEALTHCON 2025
Orlando, FL

Hybrid Event | April 6-9, 2025

April 7 | 4:15 PM

4J- Telehealth's Impact on Social Determinants of Health

Presented by:
Keisha Wilson, CCS, CPC, CPCO, CPMA, CRC
CPB, Approved Instructor

RISKCON
BY AAPC | A virtual conference

Virtual | June 10-11 | 12 CEUs |
Networking lunch



 COHENS CODING
& CONSULTING



CODERS CONNECT SEMINAR

AAPC & AHIMA
Approved 6.5 CEU's

July 12, 2025 | 8A - 3P

In Person Tickets & Virtual
Tickets are available

Four Points by Sheraton:
8520 Baymeadows Rd
Jacksonville, FL 32256

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Thank You

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