



HEALTH UNIT COORDINATOR

SHORT TERM CERTIFICATE

FAST FACTS—Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate

What exactly is a Health Unit Coordinator (HUC)?

The Health Unit Coordinator (HUC) is often the first person someone meets when they enter a hospital's nursing unit. The HUC is located at the nursing station and is an essential member of the healthcare team. Usually the responsibilities are nonclinical (no direct patient care), however, there have been some changes to the role of the HUC in that they may now be assisting patients with basic requests. The Health Unit Coordinator is central to the efficient operation of the hospital nursing unit and may be employed in all of the units including ICU, short stay, outpatient surgery and emergency facilities.

HUC responsibilities include:

- Communicate all new doctors' orders or messages to the patient's nurse
- Maintain the patient's paper chart or manage the electronic medical record
- Communicate information involving new patient arrivals and requests for patient transfers
- Perform the nonclinical tasks required for admission, discharge, and transfer of a patient
- Handle all telephone communication for the nursing unit
- Maintain nursing unit supplies
- Monitor and maintain documentation required by the Joint Commission
- Assists physicians in locating supplies or paper charts
- Assists physicians with order entry in the Electronic Health Record if needed
- Scans reports or documents into the Electronic Record or sends documents to the Health Information Management (medical records) department.
- Procures requested equipment for patient exams
- Obtains information for physicians and nursing staff regarding previously ordered procedures or tests
- Schedules and coordinates diagnostic procedures and treatments for patients when required.
- Greet and listen to concerns or requests of patients who come to the nursing station
- Assist visitors in locating a patient, restrooms, lounges or waiting areas.
- Informs visitors about rules of visitation and special precautions when necessary
- Listen to, document, and handle visitor concerns.
- Maintain statistical reports,
- Use hospital computer applications
- Use communication technology: telephone, fax, paging systems, call-lights
- Coordinating dietary orders, laboratory orders, medication orders, diagnostic orders
- and much more.

The Health Unit Coordinator is one of the key positions on the nursing unit. Health Unit Coordinators may also be employed in emergency departments, doctor's offices, clinics, ambulatory surgery centers and long-term care facilities to assist the nursing staff with clerical duties related to patients' health records and coordination of treatment.

What is the typical salary of a HUC?

Usually the starting salary is around \$10.50 to \$14.00 an hour on average; however salary varies from one healthcare institution to another.

What are the employment possibilities?

All Greater Cleveland area hospitals currently hire Health Unit Coordinators. All hospitals offer employment opportunities for the various shifts: e.g. 7:00a.m.-3:30p.m., 3:00p.m.-11:30p.m., and 11:00p.m.-7:30a.m. There are opportunities for part-time and full-time employment.

Must a Health Unit Coordinator be licensed or certified?

No, it is not necessary to be certified, however a professional organization is available that does provide a certification exam which proves your knowledge in Health Unit Coordinating skills. The National Association of Health Unit Coordinators (NAHUC) administers the exam. You can get more information at www.nahuc.org

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the program at Cuyahoga Community College?

- The program is designed to be two semesters. The first semester requires MA-1020 Medical Terminology-I and can be taken any semester. IT-1010, ENG-1010 and MA-1020 can then be taken any semester, but the HUC course HIM-1060 can only be taken fall or spring semester. The English and the IT course can be taken along with the MA-1020 Medical Terminology-I course if the student desires to do so as well.

Is the Short Term Certificate program offered in the evenings and weekends?

- HIM-1060, Health Unit Coordinator is generally only offered on Saturday or Wednesday evenings at the Metro Campus. Check the online course schedule each semester for times and locations. It is a classroom-based course.
- English, Intro to Microcomputers and Medical Terminology courses are offered as day, evening, weekend or Distance Learning classes at all Tri-C campuses.

When does Cuyahoga Community College's Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate program start?

- The program has open enrollment and courses are offered all three semesters with the exception of the HIM-1060 course. The HIM-1060 course is only offered fall and spring semesters.

When is the deadline for applying to the Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate program?

- The HUC program is self-paced so there is no application required for the admission
- Only 25 students per semester (fall and spring) will be permitted to register in the Health Unit Coordinator class (HIM-1060). Class registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis and is open to any student who has successfully passed Medical Terminology-I with a letter grade of "C" or better.
- A student may enroll in HIM-1060 and not yet declare his/her intention to attempt to earn the HUC award.

How do I earn a Health Unit Coordinator Award?

1. Submit a high school transcript or GED to the Admissions and Records office at any Tri-C campus.
2. Be **eligible for English 1010** by sufficient score on the English Assessment test or successful completion of English 0990.
3. Take and complete the required five courses with a grade of “C” or better
4. Complete a *Petition for Short Term Certificate* form and submit it to The Registrar’s Office at Cuyahoga Community College to earn the certificate. The form is found on My Tri-C Space in the MyInfo tab in the Forms channel.

What are the five required courses for completion of the Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate program?

The following courses must be completed with a **letter grade of “C” or better**:

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| • MA-1020 | Medical Terminology I | 3 credits |
| • ENG-1010 | English Composition I | 3 credits |
| • IT-1010 | Intro to Microcomputer Applications | 3 credits |
| • HIM-1060 | Health Unit Coordinator | 3 credits |
| • MA-2010 | Medical Terminology II | <u>2 credits</u> |
| | | 14 total credits |

Must I earn the Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate before I seek employment?

- No. All Greater Cleveland area hospitals are currently seeking qualified applicants for Health Unit Coordinator positions. Their pre-employment tests may include medical terminology.
- However, a student who has earned a Health Unit Coordinator Short Term Certificate would demonstrate to a perspective employer determination, commitment and professionalism.

How much does the HUC program cost at Cuyahoga Community College?

- Check the current fee schedule located on the college website www.tri-c.edu or the current semester schedule book for costs per credit hour.
- Text books are also required for all classes and the costs vary. Course textbooks can cost between \$50 to \$150 each per class. Check with the campus book center for current prices.

Is financial aid available?

- Federal and state financial aid is not available for this program as of July 1, 2014. For more information, contact the Financial Aid Department at the Campus where you originally enrolled.

What if the student has a criminal felony record?

- A student may be admitted to some Allied Health Career Programs at Cuyahoga Community College even if a felony has been committed. However, there may be instances where a student will not be permitted to test for licensure or be admitted to, or employed within, a clinical setting depending on the guidelines of the outside Accrediting/Certifying Agency or the clinical affiliate.

Can I take the classes and receive a Pass/No Pass grade instead of a letter grade?

- No. All Health Career courses, including pre-requisite courses required in any health career award/certificate/program, require a letter grade of C or better in order to be considered acceptable.

For more information, please contact Kathy Loflin, Program Manager, at (216)-987-4456 or by email at Kathy.Loflin@tri-c.edu or make an appointment with an academic counselor by calling (800)-954-8742.