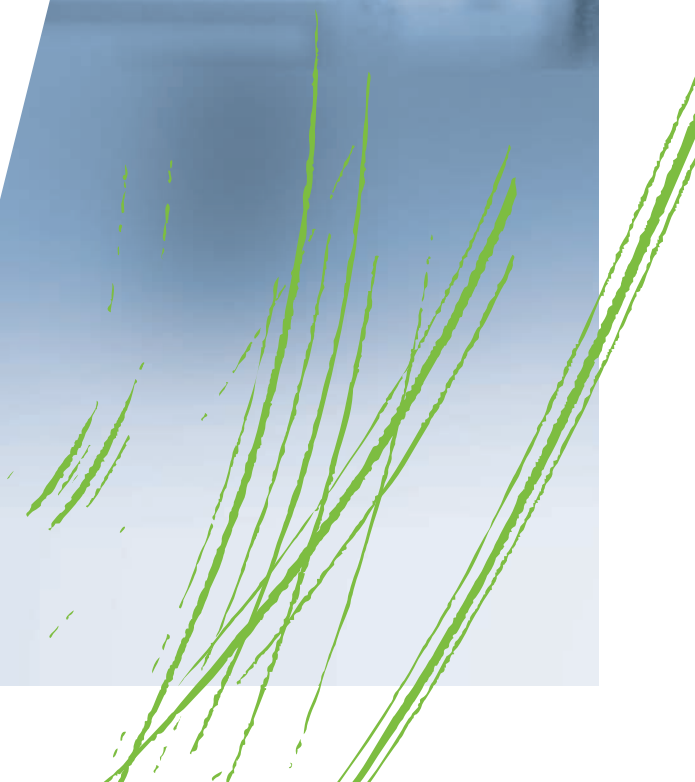# Exploring Careers in Health Informatics

LOGAN
UNIVERSITY
LEADERS *Made*

Master the Data that Drives Health Care

The US National Library of Medicine defines health informatics as "the interdisciplinary study of the design, development, adoption and application of IT-based innovations in health care services delivery, management and planning."

In capable hands, data is one of the most powerful tools in modern medicine. With Health Informatics:

- Health care data and information are organized and analyzed.

- Health care professionals improve efficiency by managing, reviewing and analyzing collected data.

- Medical records and information can be accessed and stored.

- Care providers see more positive outcomes today and in the future.

- The entire health care field receives behind-the-scenes support.

- Evidence-informed decision making is improved.

Do I need experience in health care or IT to pursue this degree?

No experience? No problem. Students do not need a background in health care to pursue a Master's in Health Informatics.

Our current students come from a diverse range of backgrounds, including retail, facilities, nursing, education and accounting. Students with IT or health care experience have also excelled in our MSHI program.

Why is Health Informatics in demand?

In 2009, the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) was passed to improve care and the patient experience through the use of electronic health records (EHR). With a common platform for sharing patient data, health care providers and researchers have easier access to more health data than ever before, creating great opportunities for improving outcomes and lowering costs.

The growth of the internet and advances in health care and data science have created a great need for experts who can bridge both worlds to develop new ways to collect, manage and interpret health care data. Sitting at the intersection of information technology and health care, Logan's online Master of Science in Health Informatics prepares students to do just that.

The challenges of data and the need for a universal system

A distinguished physician and one of the leading researchers in the field of electronic health records, Dr. Clem McDonald identifies three primary reasons behind the need for EHR:

1. To eliminate the logistical problems of paper records by making clinical data immediately available to authorized users wherever they are—no more unavailable or undecipherable clinical records.

2. To reduce the work of clinical bookkeeping required to manage patients—no more missed diagnoses when laboratory evidence shouts its existence, no more forgetting about required preventive care.

3. To make the informational value of medical records accessible to clinical, epidemiological, outcomes and management research.

With so many patient information systems currently in use, these systems will continue to evolve to improve both the patient experience and the health care provider's reimbursements. With this evolution will come expanded opportunities:

- As the health care field continues to grow, there will be more information to store and more data to be analyzed.

- Experts in the health informatics field can build stronger relationships and collaboration through the sharing of data.

- Understanding important data can help drive better health care policies at both the organizational and the governmental level.

- Patient care and outcomes can be improved.

- Collaboration between health informaticists and care providers can spark ideas for advancement in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of health issues.

What are my career prospects in Health Informatics?

With projected job growth of 18 percent through 2028, the field of health informatics is a rewarding career option for people from a variety of professional backgrounds. Not only does it present opportunities to make a difference by improving health care management and patient outcomes, the median annual salary for health informaticists is $90,000. And, 77 percent of master's program graduates report receiving a salary increase.

Graduates of Logan's Master of Science in Health Informatics program find opportunities to advance in a variety of settings: hospitals, clinics, insurance companies, colleges and universities, research departments, vendor companies and consulting firms. New and experienced health informaticists find rewarding positions as Director of Clinical Information Systems, Chief Medical Information Officer, Chief Nursing Informatics Officer, Director of Business Informatics and Data Architect.

Growth Rate

Health care represents 4 of the 5 fastest growing occupations projected for 2014 –2024.

More than half of employers reported open positions to fill.

HELP WANTED

A majority reported growth in their department and an increase in their operating budget.

Median Salary

From the 2015 HIMSS Compensation Survey, the median yearly salary in the health care information technology field was **$90,000**.

77%

of graduates reported a salary increase.

Why Logan?

Named one of the nation's top online master's degree programs, Logan University's Master of Science in Health Informatics is also one of the most affordable. With three professional concentrations to choose from, you can tailor your degree to match your career goals.

Practical, Real-World Curriculum

Focusing on health care information systems, our industry-driven curriculum was developed with the guidance of industry leaders—and potential future employers—to deliver practical knowledge and skills you can put to work right away.

Student Resources

Whether you're learning online or on-campus, our supportive faculty and grad-student community provide guidance and free resources to help you succeed in your degree and in your career.

Writing Center

To ease the transition to your graduate studies, Logan's Writing Center is here to help you prepare better papers, letters, resumes, presentations and more. Contact the Center for help with everything from brainstorming research topics to polishing a final draft.

Career Center

Students, new grads and working alumni enjoy free access to a robust range of career training and transition services through our innovative Career Services office. Our career specialists are here to help you advance your current career or transition to a new one.

Which backgrounds align with each track? How should I pick my track?

Health Care Leadership Track

This track combines information technology and health care administration theory and skills with real world applications. Three major health care areas: health care administration, health information systems and technology, and management and leadership.

This track appeals to those currently in the health care field looking to maintain a position with new skills and additional education or looking to advance within the field. Students currently in leadership or seeking leadership roles should seek this track.

Possible career paths:

The Career Services Task Force of HIMSS, PayScale and ZipRecruiter are all excellent resources to explore career options related to Health Informatics. The following information was obtained from those resources.

Chief Medical Information Officer

Chief Medical Information Officer (CMIO) is an executive-level position in health care that typically requires an MD combined with an advanced degree in Health Informatics, Health Care Administration or Business Administration and frequently reports to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Senior Vice President (SVP).

- Oftentimes, the CMIO maintains a caseload of patients on a part-time basis while spending the remaining time serving as the primary advisor to senior-level information technology staff on the design and implementation of clinical information systems.

- Employers will expect candidates to have the ability to solve complex problems, possess strong interpersonal skills and have previous experience in information technology.

- CMIOs are frequently responsible for serving on committees and must commit to ongoing professional development in order to stay on top of industry trends.

- According to ZipRecruiter, CMIOs earn an average of **$136,361** per year nationwide.

Chief Nursing Informatics Officer

To gain employment as a Chief Nursing Informatics Officer (CNIO), candidates will need to have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Science in Health Informatics combined with the necessary certifications as required by the hiring organization.

- CNIOs often report to the Chief Nursing Officer and serve as the main advisor for the organization's nursing informatics system.

- The CNIO often helps to develop the organization's mission and vision and has direct influence on nursing informatics strategies at the national level.

- A successful CNIO is a self-starter that possesses the ability to manage multiple projects while working to establish and maintain effective relationships with all stakeholders based on transparency and trust.

- According to ZipRecruiter, CNIO's earn an average salary of **$108,243** in the United States.

Director of Clinical Information Systems

A Director of Clinical Information Systems typically reports to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Vice President.

- Directors are responsible for the design, execution and maintenance of clinical information systems.

- Directors delegate IS projects to team members and provide regular updates to senior leadership.

- Experience in developing and administering department-level budgets is often required, along with the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with vendors.

- Directors are responsible for ensuring the integrity and security of health care data at all times and for developing appropriate safeguards and policies to prevent security breaches.

- While a bachelor's degree will often meet the minimum education requirements, a Master of Science in Health Informatics combined with a project management certification will increase a candidate's chances of employment.

- The average salary for a Director of Clinical Information Director in the United States is currently **$186,522**.
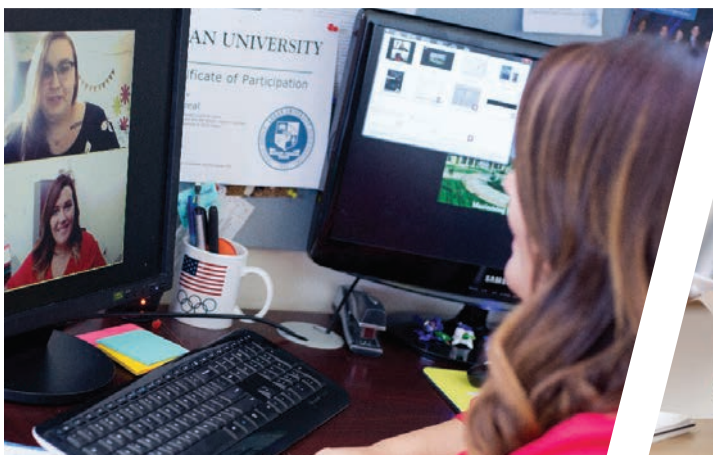
Data Analysis Track

This track blends tools of data analysis and information technology to solve emerging problems in the health care industry and the delivery of care and services. Students enrolled in these courses will learn how to interpret data and use it to communicate results and findings to solve health care problems across diverse settings.

Who should consider this track? Students looking to work with numbers and data. This can be a great fit for those seeking entry level positions or those who have a background in the field.

Possible career paths:

Data Analyst

A bachelor's degree in computer science, information technology or a related field is typically required to gain employment as a data analyst. These professionals typically:

- Utilize data analysis systems and tools to gather, maintain, and store data.

- Ensure data is collected and released in a manner that is consistent with regulatory requirements and company policy.

- Develop and deliver reports for key stakeholders.

- Research, test, and recommend software purchases.

- According to Salary.com, the average salary for data analysts in the United States is **$75,034**.

Data Architect

A minimum of a bachelor's degree in computer information systems, information technology, health informatics or a related field is typically required to gain employment as a data architect. Typically, data architects:

- Develop and maintain databases to store critical information for the organization.

- Troubleshoot and test existing systems and oversee system enhancements.

- Data architects must stay on top of industry trends to be able to provide leadership with recommendations regarding new applications.

- Train and support the professional development of team members.

- According to ZipRecruiter, Data Architects earn an average of **$132,094** nationwide.
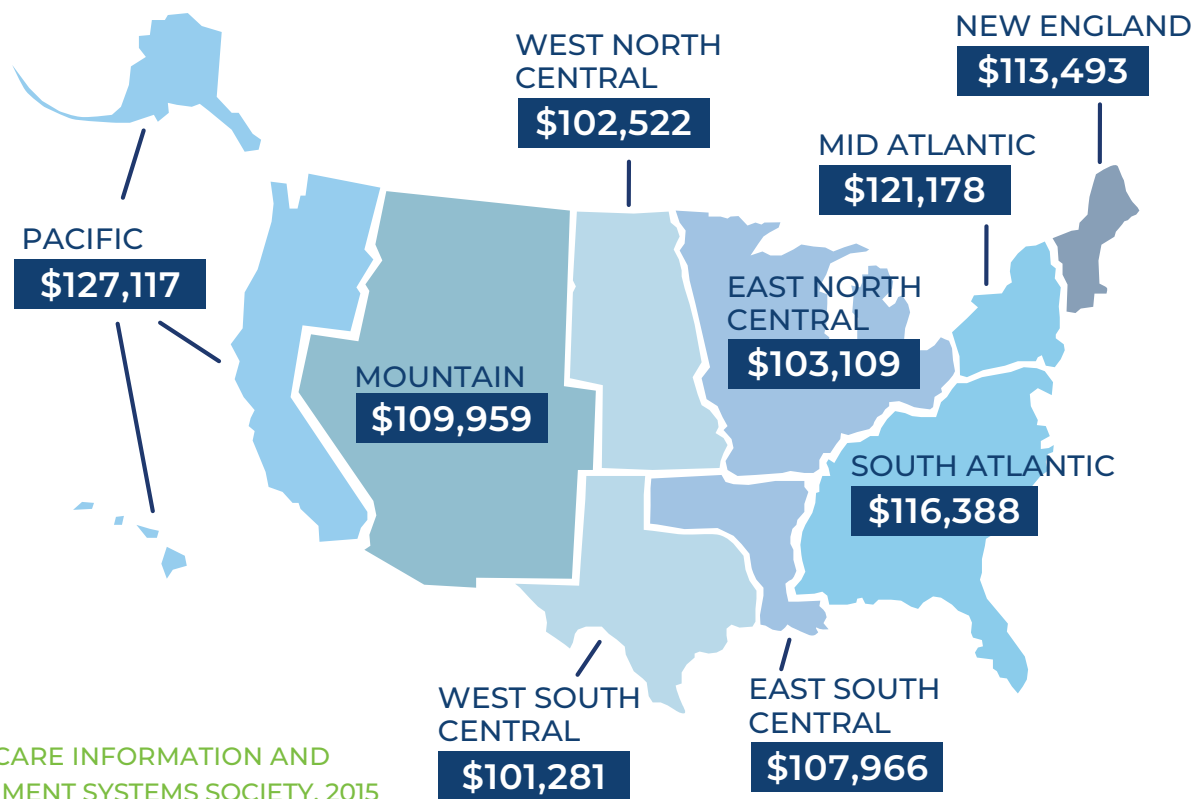
Director of Business Informatics

To meet the minimum qualifications for a Director of Business Informatics (DBI) position, job seekers will need to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Candidates with a Master of Science in Health Informatics would be considered highly qualified.

- Previous experience as an RN or MD increases marketability in this role.

- DBIs are responsible for developing and implementing audit strategy and are often responsible for leading a data analytics team.

- Employers will look for experience in and knowledge of Medicare billing and a working knowledge of Medicaid.

- Previous management and consulting experience is helpful for persons serving in this role.

- Some positions may require additional training and certification.

- According to ZipRecruiter, DBIs earn an average of **$87,028** nationwide.

Average Salaries for Health IT Professionals by Region

PACIFIC
$127,117

WEST NORTH CENTRAL
$102,522

NEW ENGLAND
$113,493

MID ATLANTIC
$121,178

EAST NORTH CENTRAL
$103,109

MOUNTAIN
$109,959

SOUTH ATLANTIC
$116,388

WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
$101,281

EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
$107,966

HEALTHCARE INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS SOCIETY, 2015

Applied Informatics Track

This track combines information technology and health care administration theory and skills with real world application. Practitioners will manage and analyze data for use in clinical decisions by patients and providers as well as advancing quality improvement efforts across health systems.

Students looking to transition out of their current role in health care should consider the Applied Informatics Track.

Possible career paths:

Medical Officer

Candidates for this position should hold a master's degree combined with certification in project management and have previous experience providing patient care in both ambulatory and in-patient settings. A Medical Officer (MO) must possess both the clinical and technical expertise to help their clients improve the cost and quality of care they deliver to patients. Candidates should possess the following qualifications:

- Working knowledge of and experience in multiple care modalities and quality best practices.

- Previous experience with processing claims, insurance verification and medical coding.

- Possess the clinical expertise to assist clients in improving their approach to public health.

- Demonstrated knowledge of health informatics solutions and commitment to continuing education.

- Ability to work effectively with multi-disciplinary teams.

- According to PayScale, a Medical Officer working in the United States earns an average of **$133,153**.

Nurse Informaticist

To qualify for positions as a Nurse Informaticist, candidates should possess current RN licensure, but most organizations will prefer that applicants have a BSN. A Master of Science in Health Informatics from Logan University will provide applicants with the technical skills needed to enter the field. Nurse Informaticists will be expected to effectively manage multiple responsibilities including:

- Evaluation and implementation of health care information systems ensuring compliance with HIPAA and organization security standards.

- The ability to train and educate administrators and team members in the effective use of system tools and software.

- Troubleshoot and resolve system issues and communicate planned downtimes to all stakeholders.

- According to ZipRecruiter, the national average for Nurse Informaticist in the United States is **$102,221**.
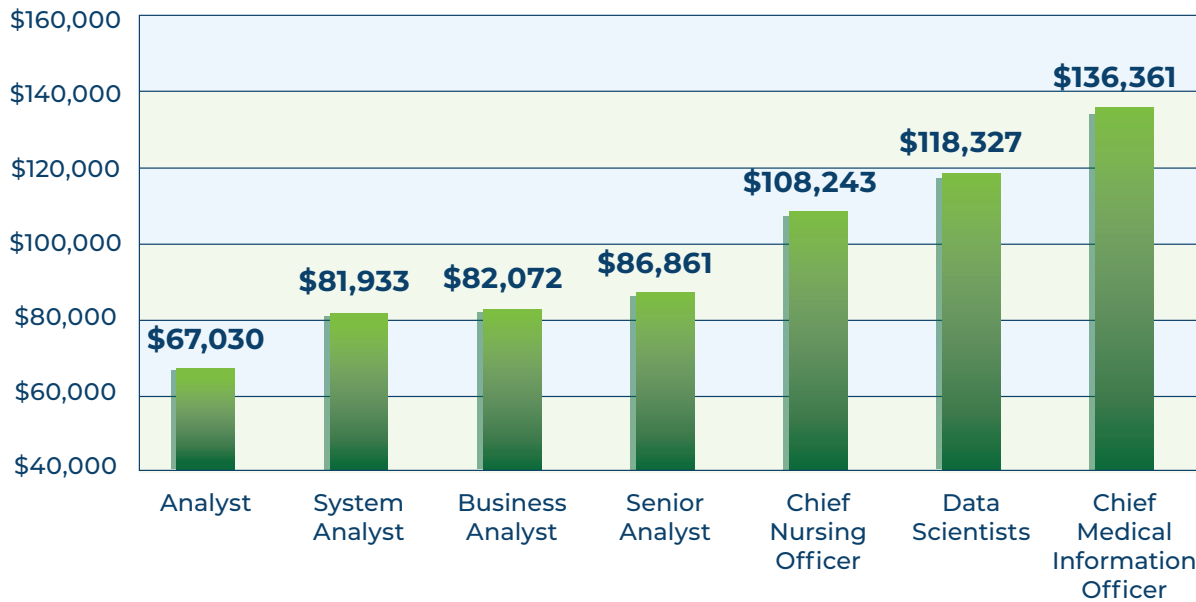
Program Manager

A bachelor's degree in computer science, IT, management or engineering will meet the minimum qualifications for some Program Manager opportunities. A Master of Science in Health Informatics would likely increase chances of employment and advancement potential. Program Managers are responsible for:

- Delegating and overseeing projects to team members.

- Assessing current programs and implementing necessary changes to ensure objectives and quality standards are being met.

- Developing and administering budgets and project schedules.

- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of industry trends and ensuring compliance with all regulatory agencies.

- According to ZipRecruiter, the average Health Informatics Manager in the United States earns **$88,808**.

Research conducted by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that employment opportunities in the field of Health Informatics are plentiful and will continue to expand by 11% through 2020, which is much faster than the average rate for other careers. Since Health Informatics professionals are in high demand, skilled workers can expect to be nicely compensated. A strong employment outlook combined with competitive salaries and high job satisfaction make a Master's degree in Health Informatics an excellent choice for anyone seeking to continue their education.

National Salary Averages by Career

Analyst: $67,030
System Analyst: $81,933
Business Analyst: $82,072
Senior Analyst: $86,861
Chief Nursing Officer: $108,243
Data Scientists: $118,327
Chief Medical Information Officer: $136,361

FAQs

Is this program all EHR?
It is not all EHR. It is a key piece but EHR is just a system. It does not define the field. In this program, students will explore all aspects of Health Informatics.

With this degree, do I have to work in a health care organization?
Not at all. This program is data driven, and as a result there tends to be blending of health care business operations with information technology. Students may find jobs in IT, research departments, universities, federal government or licensure companies.

Will this program provide me with skills for job requirements in the field?
Yes. Having this degree will fulfill many requirements. The skills acquired in the business and technology pieces of the program can be applied in multiple fields.

When should I start applying for jobs?
There's no time like the present! Career Services recommends keeping an updated resume at your fingertips. Students can connect with Career Services to create and update these documents and develop an individualized job search strategy. We recommend starting your job search at least one trimester prior to graduation.

When I graduate, will I know how to program?
Not exactly. Students in this program will be introduced to the concept of programming but will not be programmers once they complete the program.

How is the health informatics field evolving to meet recent healthcare trends?
With the rise in demand for telehealth services, remote patient monitoring, patient engagement, AI-based drug discovery, precision medicine and clinical decision support, the field of health informatics continues to grow and evolve rapidly. Beyond direct patient care and medical research, health informatics is playing an increasingly important role in monitoring and reporting on public health trends, influencing both policymakers and care providers.

Do jobs in this field provide flexibility?
Some jobs in this field provide flexibility like those of IT jobs.

Is Health Informatics a satisfying career?
In a survey conducted by HIMSS, 140 of 158 respondents said they were very satisfied with their career in health informatics. "The findings revealed a correlation between level of education and job satisfaction. Respondents with advanced degrees (master's and doctorates) were more likely to be very satisfied (89 people) or at least somewhat satisfied (55 people) with their career choice.

To learn more about Logan's nationally-rated online MSHI, visit our website and ask to speak with an admissions advisor.

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