

Expecting a Bargain: HIM Directors at Risk of Underestimating ICD-10 Coder Training Costs

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HIM directors and managers may be greatly underestimating the amount of money it will take to train their coding staff on ICD-10-CM/PCS, according to survey results from AHIMA.

The survey, conducted with more than 600 HIM professionals this past fall, showed that department heads who have only estimated their training expenses are projecting figures significantly lower than those colleagues who have prepared actual budgets.

Presented with a range of costs for training individual coders, 40 percent of those who have only estimated their costs chose the low end of the scale. Only 27 percent of those who have prepared budgets did the same.

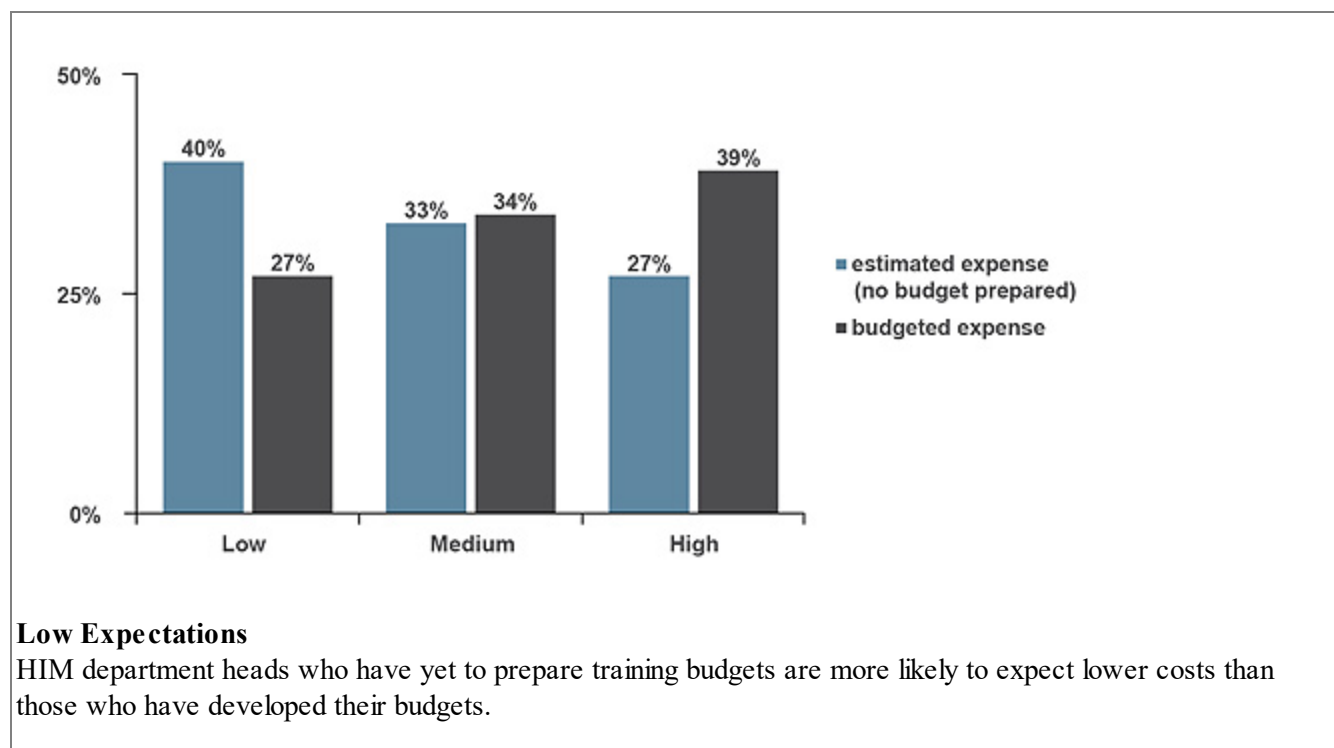
The results are nearly flipped at the high end of the scale: 27 percent of estimators expected the highest costs, compared with 39 percent of the budgeters.

The range between low and high in the survey represented a difference of at least \$2,000 per coder. A discrepancy of this magnitude would lead to a big surprise and a large gap in a facility's budget.

AHIMA recommended that organizations develop an ICD-10 implementation budget by summer 2011, which should include expenses such as training needs assessments and coder training.

Although direct and intensive individual coder training on ICD-10-CM/PCS is not recommended until early 2013, related expenses will occur sooner, including knowledge gap analyses, anatomy and physiology training or refreshers, and outreach to educate noncoder staff on the ICD-10 conversion and its impact.

For information on preparing for ICD-10, including AHIMA's ICD-10 Planning and Preparation Checklist, visit www.ahima.org/ICD10.



Article citation:

AHIMA. "Expecting a Bargain: HIM Directors at Risk of Underestimating ICD-10 Coder Training Costs" *Journal of AHIMA* 83, no.1 (January 2012): 68.

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