



Revenue integrity salaries and staffing rebound

Revenue integrity professionals are seeing the end of COVID-19-related budget and staffing cuts, according to the results of NAHRI's 2022 Revenue Integrity Salary Survey. Respondents also reported growth in their departments and gains in some benefits, including salary.

Whether you're looking to increase staffing at your revenue integrity department, earn a higher degree, or move to a different organization, opportunities are plentiful for revenue integrity professionals. However, even in a job market that favors job seekers and employees, it's tricky to choose the opportunities that are

right for you. Plot your next professional journey using the industrywide insights NAHRI collected in the 2022 Revenue Integrity Salary Survey.

Revenue integrity program

There's no one-size-fits-all revenue program. Some organizations have stand-alone revenue integrity departments staffed by professionals with dedicated revenue integrity titles. Other organizations find a revenue integrity initiative or committee is a better fit. These initiatives or committees are often led by professionals with revenue cycle, compliance, HIM,

or related titles, meaning not everyone who performs revenue integrity functions holds a revenue integrity job title.

In 2022, 60% of respondents hold a revenue integrity-specific job title such as revenue integrity director, manager, specialist, or analyst. That's a significant increase from 2021 (46%) and 2020 (41%).

Revenue integrity-specific job titles can be a key part of clarifying and focusing revenue integrity goals and priorities. They also can help managers and staff better understand their priorities and expectations, set standards for expected skills and credentials, and create a career ladder.

However, creating standardized revenue integrity–specific job titles is sometimes easier said than done. *NAHRI's recommended revenue integrity job descriptions* can be used as a guide to help organizations assign responsibilities and standardize revenue integrity departments.

onto departments, as revenue integrity works multiple other areas in addition to our own expectations,” another respondent said.

The majority (72%) of respondents are employed by an acute care hospital/health system, and of those respondents, 51% work for an organization with 500 or

supported by more than 20 full-time employees, compared to 17% in 2021 and 23% in 2020.

There's more good news: 46% of respondents said their organization is planning to hire additional revenue integrity staff in the next 12 months, up from 35% in 2021. As staffing shortages continue to tip the job market in favor of job seekers, this may be an ideal time for revenue integrity professionals looking for a fresh start or a new challenge to make their move.

Even though revenue integrity models can vary greatly between organizations, revenue integrity's position in the overall organization structure has less variation. Fifty percent of respondents said revenue integrity reports up to the vice president or director of revenue cycle.

REVENUE INTEGRITY STAFFING IS ON THE REBOUND AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF COVID-19-RELATED SHORTAGES, ACCORDING TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS.

Clarifying job titles and duties may also make it easier to demonstrate value to the organization. If revenue integrity isn't understood by leadership or its functions aren't properly defined, it can be challenging to explain how revenue integrity staff bring value to the organization and what their appropriate compensation should be.

“Our organization does not truly understand the benefit we bring to the organization nor the amount of work we try to absorb because nobody else will [do it],” one respondent said.

Other respondents echoed the sentiment, expressing frustration that their work is overlooked and that they aren't recognized for their contributions.

“[I] feel that the pay range is too low for the amount of work put

more beds. Almost half (46%) reported their organization is located in an urban area.

Large, urban organizations often have more resources to put toward stand-alone revenue integrity departments with dedicated revenue integrity staff, but even if your organization doesn't, make sure your contributions are counted. Regardless of whether you hold a revenue integrity–specific job title, keep track of your contributions to revenue integrity initiatives and include that information when discussing job duties, workloads, and compensation.

Revenue integrity staffing is on the rebound after several years of COVID-19-related shortages, according to survey respondents. In 2022, 22% of respondents indicated that their revenue integrity department/program is

Salary and benefits

Revenue integrity salaries are trending back upward, according to survey respondents. In 2022, 78% reported earning an annual salary of more than \$69,999 annually, compared to 66% in 2021 and 77% in 2020. As in previous years, annual salaries were spread over a wide range. Thirty percent earned \$70,000–\$89,999 annually in 2022, compared to 29% in 2021. In 2022, fewer respondents reported falling into the lower salary brackets while more shifted into the higher brackets. See the chart on p. 37 for a more detailed comparison between 2022 and 2021.

As hospitals recover from the worst financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the pressures that kept salaries down in 2021 may be easing. In addition, as the impact of the Great Resignation settles, newer employees that entered at lower starting salaries in the previous year have likely received raises or promotions that increased their salaries.

In fact, 76% of respondents reported they received a raise within the last year. Of that group, 30% received a 3% raise.

For benefits other than salary, there was little or no change from 2021. Notable increases include salary, with 72% of respondents indicating this benefit increased in 2022, and tuition reimbursement, which increased for 12% of respondents.

However, leading the notable decreases is health coverage, which decreased for 14% of respondents. Health coverage is an essential benefit, but rising out-of-pocket costs are putting major dents in employees' finances. Reports from the *Kaiser Family Foundation* (KFF) and the *Commonwealth Fund* have raised the alarm on rising health insurance premiums and shrinking benefits. According to these reports, median incomes aren't keeping up with increases in health insurance premiums and deductibles, meaning that a

Figure 1. How many FTEs support your revenue integrity department/program?

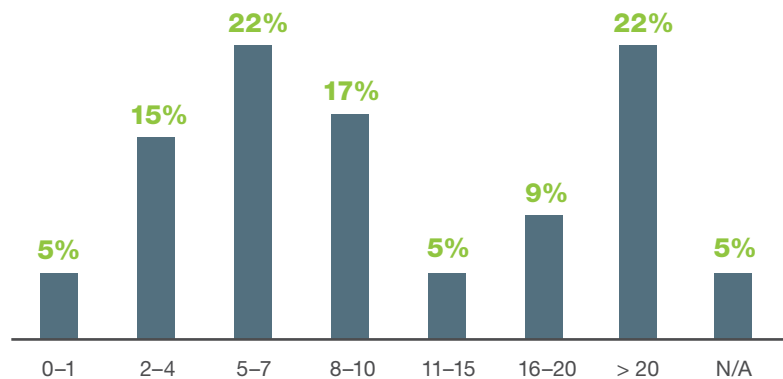


Figure 2. Does your organization plan to hire additional revenue integrity staff in the next 12 months?

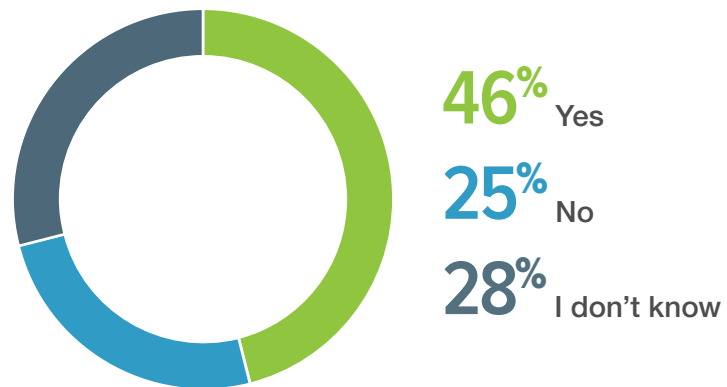
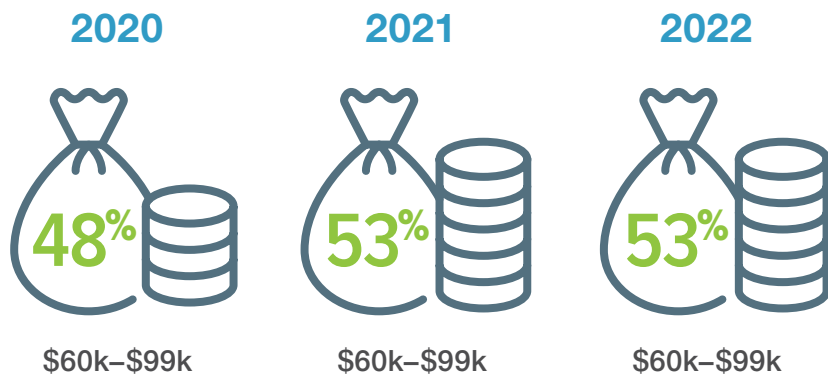


Figure 3. Annual salaries for Revenue Integrity professionals



Sources: NAHRI's 2020, 2021, 2022 Revenue Integrity Salary Survey

greater share of employees' paychecks are taken up by these costs and employees could be seeing net income decreases.

Unfortunately, the situation is unlikely to improve. *According to KFF*, health insurance marketplace insurers are proposing major rate hikes for 2023. Most are proposing a 10% increase, but some are proposing increases of 20% or higher. In today's competitive job market, insufficient and expensive health coverage can be a dealbreaker for job candidates and could push current employees to look for new opportunities. See Figure 5 for more information on changes in benefits.

Whether revenue integrity salaries and benefits are satisfactory depends on the big picture, including opportunities for advancement, the ability to earn skills and promotions that increase earning power, health coverage, vacation time, and more. However, exceptional inflation has made a satisfactory salary more difficult to obtain, as some survey respondents noted.

"I believe [revenue integrity salaries] should stay in line with inflation and not years later," a respondent said.

Education and hours

Earning a post-secondary degree is associated with higher earnings and lower rates of unemployment, according to the

Figure 4. When did you receive your last raise?

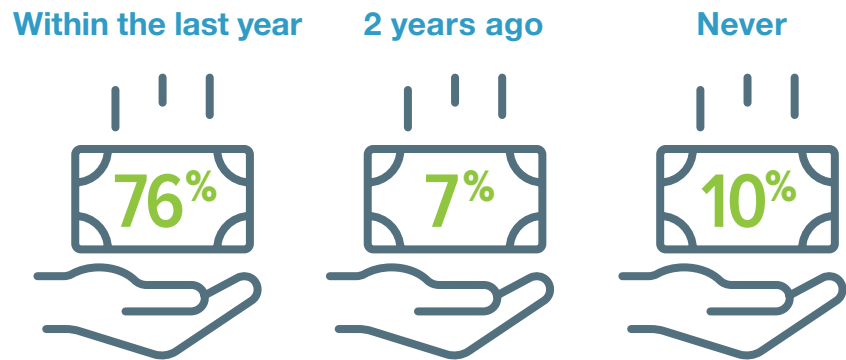


Figure 5. Have you experienced an increase or reduction in any of the following benefits over the last year?

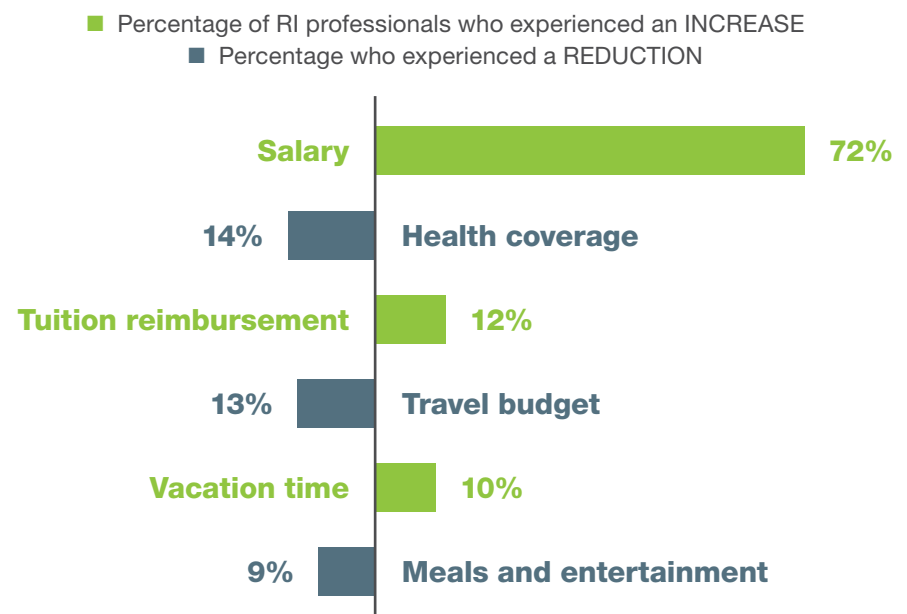


Figure 6. Education levels of Revenue Integrity professionals



Sources: NAHRI's 2022 Revenue Integrity Professional Salary Survey

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Do revenue integrity salaries reflect that?

The majority (86%) of respondents have earned some type of post-secondary degree. About one-third (33%) hold a bachelor's degree and 32% have earned a master's degree.

Of those respondents who hold a bachelor's degree:

- 30% earn \$60,000–\$89,999 annually
- 34% earn \$90,000–\$119,999 annually
- 16% earn \$120,000–\$149,999 annually
- 7% earn \$180,000 or more annually

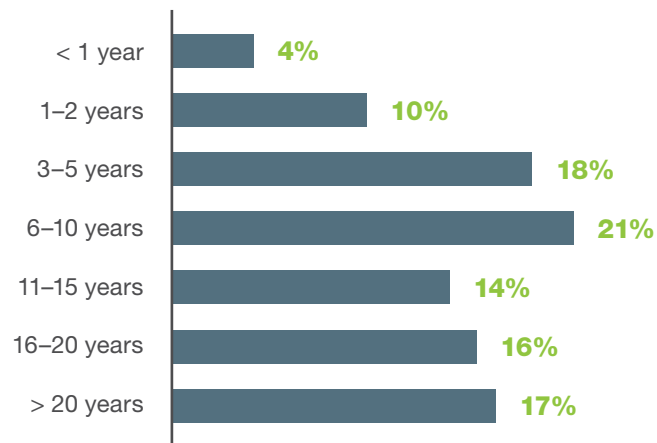
Of those respondents who hold a master's degree:

- 35% earn \$60,000–\$89,999 annually
- 30% earn \$90,000–\$119,999 annually
- 19% earn \$120,000–\$149,999 annually
- 12% earn \$180,000 or more annually

Of respondents who have not completed a post-secondary degree, 53% earn \$50,000–\$69,999 annually.

Obtaining a higher post-secondary degree may be one of the best ways to increase your earning power. Check whether your employer offers tuition

Figure 7. Approximately how many years of experience do you have as a revenue integrity professional?



Sources: NAHRI's 2022 Revenue Integrity Professional Salary Survey

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reimbursement or other programs to help cover the costs of higher education. Investigate opportunities for grants and scholarships as well as loans. An advanced degree is an investment that's likely to pay off.

Education isn't the sole measure of knowledge and skill: Practical experience is also a significant factor. Particularly in revenue integrity, not all core skills are something you'll learn in a class. Many are best developed on the job and are refined through years of experience.

Twenty-one percent of respondents indicated they have six to 10 years of experience as a revenue integrity professional. Of these respondents:

- 36% hold a master's degree
- 25% earn \$60,000–\$69,999 annually
- 31% received a 2% raise in the last year

Eighteen percent of respondents reported they have three to five years of experience. Of these newer arrivals:

- 50% hold a master's degree

- 25% earn \$70,000–\$79,999 annually
- 23% received a 3% raise in the last year

As hospitals compete for staff, make sure you don't fall behind or miss out on opportunities. A skilled, seasoned revenue integrity professional is a valuable asset to any organization, but don't assume that your years of experience and service to your organization will speak for themselves. Take opportunities to shine a spotlight on your achievements and keep track of how your work provides tangible benefit to your organization—don't fade into the background. Even simple tactics, such as coming prepared to meetings and speaking up with ideas or to share recent

accomplishments, can ensure you and your work stay visible. Ask for additional training or support to receive a new credential or a higher degree.

Revenue integrity professionals typically clock in more than eight hours per day: 54% of respondents said they work 42–50 hours per week. Because many revenue integrity positions are salaried and not eligible for overtime, these uncompensated hours need to be taken into consideration when evaluating compensation packages. If you're a salaried employee and find yourself consistently working late or skipping lunch, consider whether your current workload is fair—or sustainable. While it's sometimes necessary to work through lunch or after the official close of business to finish

up a priority task, doing so consistently is not feasible. Burnout is a significant problem and doesn't just affect clinical staff. As burnout increases, productivity and performance can slip (see the [July 2022 NAHRI Quarterly Call](#) for more information on recognizing and addressing burnout).

A look ahead

As department budgets rebound and the job market puts more bargaining power in the hands of employees and job seekers, now may be a good time to push your career to the next level. Whether that's earning a credential or a degree or applying for a new position, now is the time to take the next steps in your professional journey.

Don't wait for annual reviews to roll around to share your goals and plans with your manager. Instead, be proactive. Research your options and choose which goals you most want to work toward. Let your manager know where you want to go and how it will benefit the organization, and ask what your organization can do to help you achieve your goals. Use that feedback and the data in this report to create a professional development plan.

Having a clear destination in mind and a plan to get there demonstrates your commitment to your profession. Sticking to course can pay off—and open a new level of professional opportunities. **NJ**

