

# 2011 Convention Wrap-up

Save to myBoK

AHIMA held its 83rd Annual Convention and Exhibit October 1–6 in Salt Lake City, UT. Practitioners, educators, students, and exhibitors came together to share ideas, challenges, and solutions and hear about some of healthcare's hottest topics from industry experts.

A full exhibit hall offered a collection of the latest HIM products and services. Attendees also had multiple opportunities to socialize, network, and catch up with colleagues.

AHIMA thanks all the members, exhibitors, and corporate partners who made this year's convention a successful, educational, and enjoyable event.

## Delegates Adopt New AHIMA Bylaws

During its business meeting Sunday, October 2, the House of Delegates voted on several action items, including adopting a revision of the AHIMA Bylaws. A revision had been recommended in 2010 by the House Operations Team to modernize the bylaws and remedy some inconsistencies.

The new bylaws:

- Provide that the business and affairs of AHIMA shall be managed by the Board of Directors and state that the House of Delegates exists to govern the profession of HIM
- Create a new role of Speaker of the House of Delegates as principal spokesperson and board liaison for the House, as well as a new role of a Speaker-elect
- Establish new roles of Secretary and Treasurer of the Board of Directors (these were previously held by the executive director)
- Address the right of AHIMA to establish affiliates (such as the AHIMA Foundation or CAHIIM) that have separate legal status from the association. It also addresses AHIMA's right to establish bodies that do not have separate legal status, such as commissions, advisory bodies, and nonboard committees

Online discussion and the revised bylaws are available via the State Leaders and House of Delegates Community of Practice.

The delegates also adopted a revision of the Code of Ethics and resolutions on diversity and inclusion and on HIM professionals managing the quality of health data.

A resolution on managing the master patient index in an integrated delivery system was withdrawn for future consideration.

## Leading by Example

During Monday's general session, AHIMA President Bonnie Cassidy, MA, RHIA, FAHIMA, FHIMSS, described how the AHIMA Board of Directors adheres to the principle of "leadership by example."

"Working together, with a spirit of collaboration, with mutual respect for one another and complete respect for the HIM profession, was the magic that we needed and we had this year," Cassidy said.

Cassidy introduced new CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, who took office September 29. Cassidy described how the AHIMA board established strategic priorities for AHIMA this year, focusing on governance, education, research, recognition marketing and branding, and agility as an organization.

## Leading through Trust

Monday's general session speaker Stephen M.R. Covey described how things get done faster, cheaper, and better when trust is high.

"The effect of trust is there, whether we can see it or not," Covey said. "We all know it, because we've all been there."

Covey covered principles from his best-selling book, *The Speed of Trust*, and shared tools and behaviors for increasing trust.

Additional resources based on Covey's presentation are on a special AHIMA page on the FranklinCovey Web site, [www.myspeedoftrust.com/ahima](http://www.myspeedoftrust.com/ahima).

## **AHIMA Announces HIM Jobs Initiative**

At a press conference on Monday, AHIMA announced its "HIM Jobs for America" Initiative, a sustained effort to support American employment and help improve the healthcare of underserved Americans in communities across the country.

The initiative includes a legislative platform that addresses:

- A tax credit that provides incentives for employers that provide training to prepare credentialed HIM practitioners with the core job skills demanded by an integrated electronic health information system.
- A tax credit that provides incentives for employers that provide retraining and/or additional training to current HIM workers that prepares them to contribute to the development and operation of an electronic health information environment.
- HIT Pro competency exams, which confirm that workers' experiences and skills satisfy the nation's need for health IT. Employers would receive equal credit for all their HIM professionals who pass the exam in lieu of formal training.
- Expanding and funding baccalaureate and graduate-level curricula to further educate the next generation of HIM professionals through incentives to accredited state and land-grant colleges and universities as well as scholarships for students who pursue an HIM degree at or beyond a baccalaureate degree.

AHIMA's new initiative will be bolstered by its partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services and North Shore Medical Labs to provide free health IT training to providers and staff in underserved communities. North Shore will donate electronic health record software and services through Nortec Software. The demonstration program will assist physicians in small practices in Alabama, Mississippi, and North Carolina.

## **Putting the Patient at the Center**

On Tuesday Dr. Carolyn Clancy, MD, director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, gave an overview of the agency's work to achieve better quality, access, and patient-centered care. HIM is an "indispensable" partner in the effort to remake the healthcare system, Clancy said.

One important part of the picture is supporting patient-centered outcomes research, which contributes to the goal of evidence-based care.

While the role of health IT in patient-centered outcomes research is still being determined, Clancy said the HIM role is vital in the three elements she believes are needed to remake healthcare: "information, incentives, and infrastructure."

## **Ready for ICD-11?**

Dr. T. Bedirhan Üstün, MD, PhD, team coordinator of classification, terminologies, and standards in the department of health statistics at the World Health Organization, talked about the US's long-awaited ICD-10 implementation. Üstün noted the country has been procrastinating over ICD-10 so long that ICD-11 is in development.

But HIM professionals should take heart. "Your biggest assets are your knowledge, your association, and your potential," Üstün told the audience. "You have not only a great tradition, but a great future. Your biggest power is in the mind of a coder," he said, referring to the winning video in a 2010 AHIMA contest.

## **"Zero Regrets"**

Eight-time Olympic speed-skating medalist and Dancing with the Stars champion Apolo Anton Ohno capped convention with an inspiring keynote presentation. He shared the personal story behind his success and the hard-won truths and strategies he has discovered in good times and bad.

## "Dream Big"

Incoming AHIMA President Patty Thierry Sheridan, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA, called on her audience to "dream big" and noted that the HIM profession is in the midst of a cycle of creative business destruction, in which existing technologies and processes are being replaced by new ones.

"The future of HIM rests in our collective hands," Sheridan said, "and our successful future depends on our ability to experiment, innovate, adapt, collaborate, and clearly define updated and new HIM roles. This will require all of us to educate our employers and stakeholders on how HIM roles are changing and how updated and new roles can help to contain healthcare costs while improving the quality of data."

Read full coverage of the convention in AHIMA Today, [www.ahimatoday-digital.com](http://www.ahimatoday-digital.com)

## Save the Date for 2012

Join AHIMA next year for the 84th Convention and Exhibit in Chicago, IL. The convention will be held September 29–October 4. Visit [www.ahima.org/events/convention](http://www.ahima.org/events/convention) for more information.

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