

A Year of Progress: Outstanding Advancements on 2011 Strategic Initiatives

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By Bonnie S. Cassidy, MPA, RHIA, FAHIMA, FHIMSS

On behalf of the AHIMA Board of Directors, I am pleased and proud you chose HIM as your profession. You, the member, are AHIMA's number-one priority, and you, in turn, have a very important role every day as an HIM leader.

AHIMA has grown to be a thriving association with more than 63,000 members, and we must all collaborate and learn from each other as we strengthen our leadership position in the healthcare industry.

I would like to thank the 2011 AHIMA Board of Directors, AHIMA staff, volunteer leaders, and members for your faith in me as president. Working together with mutual respect for each other and for the HIM profession was the magic we needed this year.

Progress on 2011 Priorities

The AHIMA Board established some challenging strategic priorities in 2011, which focused on governance, education, research, recognition marketing and branding, and agility. We have made outstanding advancements in each area.

In each strategic area, the board created and leveraged existing relationships with AHIMA staff and volunteer leaders to achieve excellence. We challenged AHIMA staff and volunteer leaders to use and expand their critical and strategic thinking skills and established a belief system in lifelong learning for HIM professionals.

We set the bar this year for every member to renew their commitment the AHIMA Code of Ethics because it is our ethical code that differentiates the HIM profession and strengthens our commitment to one another and to HIM.

For the governance initiative, we revised the AHIMA Bylaws, designing a governance model that includes an evolutionary process that differentiates AHIMA as a world-class, agile association. The model allows for the addition of necessary ex officio members that will strengthen our leadership. We also clarified board roles and responsibilities as part of the bylaws revision process and established a board continuing education and development program.

For the education initiative, we focused on creating an executive position where the best of the best HIM professionals can be seen as equals at the executive table and integral to the ultimate success of an organization's mission.

The Education Strategy Committee has transformed into the Council for Excellence in Education, which will be responsible for the associate, baccalaureate, and master's curriculum. It will develop a strategic marketing plan to act on market opportunities and promote HIM education, best practices, standards, policy, and research.

We believe in the importance of evidenced-based research and the need for creating a governance model for a new research, innovation, and thought leadership center.

We are in the midst of the greatest transformation in the history of our healthcare system, which cannot be done successfully without HIM leadership. To build best practices and influence policy, we must be able to articulate lessons learned and HIM research with EHRs, ICD-10, meaningful use, computer-assisted coding, HIE, and accountable care organizations.

Strategic thinking and research brought about the initial development and refinement of the HIM Core Model, which focuses on the current and future state of the HIM profession in all areas, including education, research, influencing public policy, and establishing HIM best practices and standards. This background and framework was essential as we identified the urgency

and importance of advancing branding and recognition as a key strategic initiative. AHIMA's value proposition must be expanded in order to develop key messages to our stakeholders.

Because we lead the HIM profession, it's important that we continuously improve, make change, and are recognized for our significant contributions and accomplishments. What unifies us as an association are our diverse skills, commitment to HIM, and collective experiences.

ARRA and ICD-10 have put the spotlight on the HIM profession and our members to deliver. It is an incredible opportunity for us to leverage our strengths and demonstrate our ability to deliver value-added services to our respective organizations. EHRs get implemented-but achieving excellence and meaningful use only comes with our discipline and professional HIM principles that guide the development of our organizational HIM policy and EHR governance.

We must be recognized as the profession that is uniquely qualified to lead the initiative for successful ICD-10 implementation and establishing strategies for implementing computer-assisted coding. HIM leadership must continue to create the best practices and standards that ensure the privacy, security, accuracy, and value of health information in our electronic healthcare industry.

More than ever before-perhaps more than ever again-we must work harder, smarter, and faster. Each of us must dream big and break down barriers separating our dreams from reality.

In every initiative, we strove to be nimble and agile, giving AHIMA the opportunity to immediately respond to the market and take advantage of unique, limited window opportunities.

2012 Initiatives

As we position ourselves for the next few years, we have renewed our commitment to making you, the AHIMA member, our number-one priority, and we have refined our key strategic initiatives for the next 18 months to continue our existing initiatives and adding the following: encourage growth within our profession by enhancing educational programming for the membership and first- and second-career individuals; remain fiscally viable to support our mission and vision; and maintain an environment that encourages team building, cross functional communication, and member and employee satisfaction.

At AHIMA, we're building a world-class association that supports HIM's ability to prosper through anything, together, one member at a time. With a new CEO and governance model, we believe that our time is now. At this time we know that we all can stand together with the power to be powerful; believing we can make things better.

It has been the ultimate professional honor to serve as the 2011 President of AHIMA, and I thank you for your support.

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Article citation:

Cassidy, Bonnie S.. "A Year of Progress: Outstanding Advancements on 2011 Strategic Initiatives" *Journal of AHIMA* 82, no.11 (November 2011): expanded online version.

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