

Are We Walking the Walk?: Measurements, Scorecards, and Milestones: Part 2

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by Mervat Abdelhak, PhD, RHIA

In my June column I outlined three programs AHIMA is implementing to achieve our 2005 e-HIMTM goals. In this month's message, I will highlight four programs addressing our 2005 education and certification outreach and success by association initiatives.

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education. Official transfer of accreditation for HIM programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree levels to the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) occurred March 1, 2005. (CAHIIM was established through a bylaw change approved by the AHIMA House of Delegates on June 30, 2004.) But our work as CAHIIM has just begun. We need to assess whether CAHIIM has served both the public's and profession's interests well. To do this, we must look beyond the development of curriculum frameworks and examine the impact of quality education in advancing the value of the HIM practice and in addressing work force needs.

The Virtual HIT Lab. This collaboration of educators and corporate partners will help us address our educational goals by better preparing our graduates for their entrance into the work world. AHIMA's virtual lab will provide educational institutions with access to a full array of core HIM technologies, supporting tools, and resources, which they can effectively integrate into individual courses. The lab will allow students to work with the technologies they will encounter in the workplace in an environment that closely simulates real-world applications.

Currently we are in the first phase of this project. Representatives from educational institutions and corporate partners have convened to develop the framework upon which the lab is to be built. We will continue to monitor and assess our performance with the virtual HIT lab as we complete phase 1 and move to the next level.

Joint Public Policy Alliance. AHIMA and the American Medical Informatics Association have entered into a three-year agreement that commits staff and resources to develop joint policy positions and targeted advocacy strategies. The alliance will demonstrate that like-minded entities with shared core values can collaborate for greater influence and impact. It is also an example of outreach for the greater good.

This agreement represents a milestone for our association, giving our collaborative efforts greater focus on specific outcomes to be derived from our alliances.

Consumer Education Campaign and MyPHR. AHIMA has developed a national public service campaign to empower healthcare consumers to become more active in their own healthcare by maintaining a personal health record (PHR). Earlier this year, AHIMA offered training sessions for state community education coordinators, which 26 component state associations (CSAs) attended. The success of this consumer campaign will depend upon our CSAs and community education coordinators, who will deliver this information to local audiences and widen AHIMA's outreach.

We have applied our leadership execution skills to affect positive change in our association, our profession, and the industry. Through the efforts of our staff, volunteers, and you, the members, AHIMA is recognized as a driving force in our industry's transformation. Through its 2005 initiatives, AHIMA has developed a strong, credible, and respected voice in healthcare.

Mervat Abdelhak (madelhak@pitt.edu) is the department chair and associate professor of health information management for the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh.

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