

# Bringing Patients and Their Information Together

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*By Pamela Lane, MS, RHIA, interim chief executive officer*

In July, AHIMA unveiled the first-of-its kind Patient Request for Health Information Model Form, which you can find online. Developed by two AHIMA practice councils, the form is designed to be a plain-language document that explains to consumers their right to access health information from a provider or organization. The goal is to assist consumers, who may or may not understand the provisions of the HIPAA Privacy Rule, their rights under the rule, or their ability to obtain copies of the information in the media of their choosing.

AHIMA developed the form in response to feedback from patient advocacy groups that the process of accessing patient information wasn't as smooth as it should be. We're also in step with the times as the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT recently issued a report that the current processes are often frustrating for patients and staff. "Improving the process is a win-win for both patients and health systems," the report says.<sup>1</sup>

At press time, the form has been downloaded more than 7,000 times. We hope that you'll download our request for health information form and encourage providers to adopt it. Visit [www.ahima.org/modelform](http://www.ahima.org/modelform) to download the form. We're also listening to your feedback about the form and how it can be even better, so keep talking to us.

In this issue, Mary Butler takes a closer look at AHIMA's Model Form and its implications for healthcare in "[New Request for Health Information Form Relieving ROI Headaches](#)."

We'll be talking about patient empowerment, as well as other important topics such as data analytics, this month at our annual AHIMA Convention and Exhibit in Los Angeles, CA. This month's cover story, "[Data Analytics and Informatics are Two Separate Disciplines \(And Why This Matters to HIM\)](#)," written by a team of authors from AHIMA's Informatics and Data Analytics Practice Council, makes important distinctions between health data analytics and informatics and explores how interested HIM professionals can prepare themselves for jobs in these areas. Want to learn more about data analytics? AHIMA will be hosting the Data Institute, "Making Information Meaningful," on December 7 to December 8 in Orlando, FL.

Healthcare fraud and abuse are back in the news, with charges being brought against more than 400 people by the US Department of Justice (DOJ) in July.<sup>2</sup> "[Busting Bad Medicine](#)" by Dana McWay and Seena Kurian identifies the fraudulent practices that have been the focus of the DOJ in recent years.

Finally, this month at the convention AHIMA will celebrate the latest recipients of the Grace Award. Daniel Land delves into the history of Grace Whiting Myers, for whom the award is named, in "[Legacy of the 'First Lady of HIM' Lives on through Grace Award](#)."

AHIMA's form is our latest step in the long journey of making health information a tool for patient empowerment and better health. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

## Notes

1. Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. "[Improving the Health Records Request Process for Patients](#)." 2017.
2. Byers, Jeff. "[Federal fraud takedown another warning shot for providers](#)." *Healthcare Dive*. July 18, 2017.

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