

# Change—and Great Potential—Ahead for HIM

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By Wylecia Wiggs Harris, PhD, CAE, chief executive officer

You can tell a lot about an industry by reading its news headlines. Some recent examples illustrate how health information and patient data are becoming part of the transformation of the healthcare industry:

- “CMS is looking for its first Chief Health Informatics Officer”: The creation of this position, to guide the federal agency’s health IT strategy and interoperability issues, is a first.<sup>1</sup>
- “Poor Data Sharing Leads to Delays in Care, Global Survey Finds”: In a survey, half of consumers said they or someone they know have experienced a delay in care due to information not being shared between healthcare professionals. Patients are noticing the disconnects in their care and they are starting to make their voices heard that things need to change.<sup>2</sup>
- “Is Digital the Prescription for Improving Health?”: A recent survey found that physicians are encouraged by the promise of digital technology to improve population health, while consumers are looking for incentives to share information (61 percent of consumers would share information digitally with physicians if it reduced wait times).<sup>3</sup>

Articles like these reflect the profound changes taking place around us—and illustrate the great potential ahead of us. All of this has been on my mind as we prepare to celebrate AHIMA’s 90th anniversary during our annual convention in Miami, FL.

The articles in this issue of the *Journal* reflect a profession that is changing in several ways. In our cover story, “Double Trouble—Using Health Informatics to Tackle Duplicate Medical Record Issues,” Shannon Harris, MBA, RHIA, and Shannon Houser, PhD, MPH, RHIA, FAHIMA, explore informatics-based ways to solve, prevent, and manage duplicate medical record issues—one of the industry’s most persistent data quality issues.

In “How to Prepare for EHR Downtime,” Debra Primeau, MA, RHIA, FAHIMA, speaks with a panel of HIM professionals that share their lessons learned during EHR downtime as well as how organizations can function when their systems are down for any period of time.

Finally, a group of HIM professionals make recommendations on best practices and appropriate solutions to collect and disseminate information for improving the health of the LGBTQ population—as called for in the Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2020 initiative—in “Using Population Health, Inclusive HIM Practices to Better Treat LGBTQ Patients.”

I hope you’ll join us in Miami this month—or follow along on social media and the *Journal* website to learn about the latest in HIM and the industry as we move into the future.

## Notes

1. Nerney, Chris. “CMS is looking for its first Chief Health Informatics Officer.” *Connected Care Watch*. June 29, 2018. [www.connectedcarewatch.com/news/cms-looking-its-first-chief-health-informatics-officer](http://www.connectedcarewatch.com/news/cms-looking-its-first-chief-health-informatics-officer).
2. Leventhal, Rajiv. “Poor Data Sharing Leads to Delays in Care, Global Survey Finds.” *Healthcare Informatics*. June 25, 2018. [www.healthcare-informatics.com/news-item/interoperability/poor-data-sharing-leads-delays-care-global-survey-finds](http://www.healthcare-informatics.com/news-item/interoperability/poor-data-sharing-leads-delays-care-global-survey-finds).
3. EY.com. “EY Future of Health Survey 2018.” [www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-is-digital-the-prescription-for-improving-health/\\$FILE/ey-is-digital-the-prescription-for-improving-health.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-is-digital-the-prescription-for-improving-health/$FILE/ey-is-digital-the-prescription-for-improving-health.pdf).

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