

Coding 2.0: The Future is Now

Save to myBoK

By Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, chief executive officer

In 1998, AHIMA's Board of Directors created a Coding Futures Task Force of AHIMA members and healthcare industry experts to imagine the future of coding.

In a 2000 *Journal of AHIMA* article, the group reported that while new opportunities for HIM professionals were certain,

"these opportunities will only be available to those who are prepared to develop and assess technology at deeper levels than they currently do. Those who wish to take advantage of the opportunities will need to develop new skills, especially in areas of formalization such as the development of algorithmic translation, concept representation, and mapping among clinical nomenclatures and reimbursement methods."¹

The future of coding is here. It hasn't disappeared, but the progress of electronic health records, computer-assisted coding (CAC), and other technological change is altering the way coding is done.

Reality 2016: A Dialogue

The importance of education continues-it's still critical to learn new skills, both on the job and through formal education. Here at AHIMA, we're still envisioning the future of the profession. This year, education is back in the spotlight. In the coming months you'll hear more about "Reality 2016," the vision for the future of education and the profession developed by AHIMA's Council for Excellence in Education (CEE). Reality 2016 is the successor to "[Vision 2016: A Blueprint for Quality Education in HIM](#)" published in 2007.

You'll hear a repeated theme-"Learn More, Earn More"-as we explore how we can increase the number of HIM professionals who have master's degrees. Data suggests that a master's degree can result in higher salaries and better job opportunities in many professions. Given the increasing complexity and demands of HIM jobs, graduate education is a great way to improve your professional stature.

Other Reality 2016 initiatives will include enhancing the associate degree to include areas of specialization, investing in faculty and member development, and increasing the work force with additional graduate-prepared professionals by creating eligible pathways for them. Expect to hear more about this important work in next month's issue and from your state leaders and representatives in the House of Delegates. We want your feedback.

'Beneficial and Vital'

This month's *Journal* illustrates how much times have changed for coding. We get an inside look at performance improvement via CAC in Kathy Hartman's "[Computer-Assisted Coding at the Cleveland Clinic: A Strategic Solution](#)." June Bronnert and her colleagues at Intelligent Medical Objects connect terminologies to care delivery in "[Problem-Centered Care Delivery](#)."

If you missed AHIMA's ICD-10 Summit, staff writer Chris Dimick offers some conclusions and take-aways in "[ICD-10 Lessons Learned](#)." And Sue Bowman and Richard Averill establish that "There Are Critical Reasons for Not Further Delaying the Implementation of the New ICD-10 Coding System." First published online at the *Journal of AHIMA* Web site in May, the authors note that "the speedy implementation of ICD-10 is both beneficial and vital to the healthcare industry."

"Beneficial and vital"-two words that I'd say describe the role HIM professionals play, from our daily coding duties to education development for the future of the profession. Welcome to the future!

Note

1. Johns, Merida. "A Crystal Ball for Coding." *Journal of AHIMA* 71, no.1 (2000): 26-33.

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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