

Commitment to Progress through e-HIM

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by Linda Kloss, RHIA, CAE, executive vice president/CEO

Consensus is growing for a national health information infrastructure (NHII). As financial resources permit, all types of healthcare organizations are moving from paper to electronic health records (EHR). More than ever, the HIM profession must be visible and vocal advocates for this transformation. To that end, AHIMA launched an e-HIM initiative at the National Convention in San Francisco last fall.

What is e-HIM and Why Now?

E-HIM stands for electronic health information management and represents our professional commitment to:

- promote the migration from paper to an electronic health information infrastructure
- reinvent how we manage records and information—from creation through use
- deliver measurable cost and quality results from improved information management

The e-HIM imperative applies to all HIM professionals, including those who work in coding, quality management, or another role that seems a step removed from the EHR, because there is a national need to improve the health information infrastructure for the benefit of the public, providers, and payers. In “Information Infrastructure Promises Better Healthcare, Lower Costs,” Janet M. Marchibroda and Ticia Gerber explain the growing momentum to implement a more interconnected, electronic health information infrastructure. In “A Shot in the Arm for Public Health,” Claire Dixon-Lee, PhD, RHIA, illustrates that this is not only a health industry imperative but a public imperative as well.

A Vision of Integration

The 2003 work plan for e-HIM begins with articulating a vision that clearly describes HIM practice reinvented through integrated technology. With the help of industry efforts and the support of research, this effort will help us better understand the impact of the EHR and information infrastructure on HIM practice.

Next, the Association will offer migration paths so you can implement change more confidently. HIM experts explain the challenges and opportunities of the transition to e-HIM in “HIM on the Front Lines of Change: Marching Toward the National Health Information Infrastructure,” by Gina Rollins.

Adoption of uniform information content and messaging standards is critical to an integrated information infrastructure. AHIMA will redouble its efforts to develop and advance standards needed to effectively deploy technology for core HIM functions.

New Issues, New Look for 2003

In this issue, the *Journal* debuts the first of four articles on transcription from the HIM professional’s vantage point. In “Managing the Transcription Revolution,” Scott D. Faulkner provides a useful assessment of the state of the art of transcription practice and technology. Future articles will address cost and quality control, new technology, and outsourcing issues.

Have you noticed the *Journal*’s new look? In conjunction with the Association’s 75th anniversary activities, we’ve updated the design to improve the appearance and readability of this vital member benefit.

An Anniversary and a Commitment to the Future

This is a very special year for our profession as we celebrate our diamond anniversary and build the foundation for the next 75 years. Let's take time to celebrate our many successes and renew our commitment to the importance of the work we do.

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