E-HIM: Mobilizing for Impact

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by Melanie Brodnik, PhD, RHIA

What an exciting time for healthcare and our profession. Tremendous strides have been made toward transitioning healthcare from paper to an electronic environment. Many AHIMA staff and members have participated in key collaborations during the last two years to advance the implementation of electronic health records (EHRs) and electronic health information management (e-HIM™). In addition, major government endeavors are laying the groundwork for strategic action toward the development of the EHR and an overall national health information infrastructure.

Recognizing the speed at which change is occurring, this summer's Team Talks were used to brainstorm ways to mobilize for the impact of e-HIM. State leaders and delegates discussed five topics (identification of e-HIM leaders and leadership projects, education of members, advocacy to the industry, government, and general population, development of best practices, and development of resources and practice tools) as related to three questions:

- What are the initiatives that are most important to our members regarding e-HIM?
- How can the national, state, and local associations, as well as the Communities of Practice (CoP), best contribute to achieving these initiatives?
- What are the key elements of our collaboration to ensure success?

Input from the discussions will be used to identify resources and leadership in e-HIM, increase coordination between national, state, regional, and local associations, and develop a planning model that can be used in the future. Their responses, titled "Mobilizing for Impact: e-HIM Feedback from Summer Team Talks, July 2004," are available online on the State Leaders and House of Delegates CoP. Please consider offering feedback regarding these topics on the e-HIM CoP beginning this month. Each of us has a responsibility to look at what we can do individually to support EHR implementation and e-HIM in our professional work environment.

The rapid changes we are facing in practice are not exclusive to the United States. England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan, and Israel are just a few of the countries that are also actively transitioning to EHRs and e-HIM. We have a chance to discover what our colleagues in other countries are doing when we host the 14th Congress of the International Federation of Health Records Organizations in conjunction with AHIMA's 76th National Convention and Exhibit in Washington, DC, this October. More than 280 educational sessions are planned with presenters from more than 20 countries. Presentations will address a variety of HIM-related activities and the increasing use of health information technology to enhance the overall quality and cost-effectiveness of healthcare delivery worldwide. We will have the opportunity to share HIM solutions in a global community and network with colleagues.

References

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