

HIM Leadership Challenge...for the Next 80 Years!

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by Linda L. Kloss, RHIA, CAE, FAHIMA

As AHIMA celebrates its 80th anniversary this month, we focus on the significant challenges that lay ahead. Though most emphasis today is on acquiring and implementing health IT, this will give way to an emphasis on managing and creating value from an organization's information assets.

Information management encompasses processes from acquisition, quality control, cleansing and storage, and ultimately to analysis and use. It involves technology for managing information, ensuring confidentiality and security, governing information, and adopting the appropriate standards and practices. It also involves the integration of staff, processes, and technologies to improve health and healthcare and organizational performance. No small charge.

New Roles, New Competencies

"HIM Jobs of Tomorrow" describes new roles reflecting the range of information management challenges from enterprise-wide managerial roles such as CIO to areas of specialization such as terminology asset management. Some are today's roles reshaped to a digital future, while others are new possibilities. Though not a comprehensive list, this article underscores the growing diversity of the HIM discipline and the need for continued innovation.

"Taking the Specialty Route" reports on trends in technical-level HIM roles and education. AHIMA's Vision 2016 white paper envisions greater specialization and greater flexibility to meet market needs. More students are enrolled in more associate degree health IT programs than ever before.

While demand is strong for qualified graduates, in a tight market, recruiting experienced HIM professionals is not getting easier. Kayce Dover offers advice in "Successful Recruiting Strategies." As the demand for HIM professionals continues to increase, and the supply of experienced HIM professionals continues to lag, implementing a successful recruitment strategy becomes increasingly important.

Supporting New Graduates

It is ironic considering the work force shortage that new graduates, particularly those in technical roles, have a tough time getting their first jobs. The reasons are many, but most often they reflect the effects of downsizing in the managerial ranks, leaving remaining managers and staff too busy to develop new graduates.

If new graduates can't get jobs because of lack of experience—even as jobs go unfilled—there won't be new graduates in the future. If you don't mentor a new graduate, who will?

I encourage you to take this issue up with human resources in your organization. Work with colleagues throughout your community to give new graduates a chance to build their resume. Find creative ways to offer short-term apprenticeships. Your organization will benefit, graduates will benefit, and the field of HIM will thrive. Let's work together to solve this solvable problem.

The *Journal* is proud to present an original article on a very timely topic relating to the electronic health record. In "e-Record, e-Liability" Michael Vigoda, Jill Callahan Dennis, and Michelle Dougherty outline the issue of medical liability and EHR. Concurrent with increased EHR adoption, the courts have redefined the discovery process for electronic records. Strong work is being done to develop the guiding standards and ensure their integration into EHRs.

This is an issue that is unfamiliar to many in healthcare, and this article is one that should be thoughtfully read and shared with colleagues. Addressing the issue requires informed leadership and learning by HIM. It is just one of the many challenges to be

faced in the next 80 years!

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