

HIM on the World Stage

Save to myBoK

By Kathleen A. Frawley, JD, MS, RHIA, FAHIMA

The 17th General Assembly and World Congress of the Information Federation of Health Information Management Associations (IFHIMA) was held May 12-15 in Montreal, Canada. There were over 500 attendees representing over 30 countries. Before the conference officially started, an all-day session for educators was held on May 11. Speakers discussed educational systems, certifications, best practices, and challenges.

IFHIMA President Margaret Skurka, MS, RHIA, CCS, FAHIMA opened the General Assembly on May 12 and representatives from the 19 member countries were introduced. AHIMA representative Lorraine Fernandes, RHIA, from California, was appointed by the AHIMA Board as the National Director for the US. AHIMA member Julie Wolter, MA, RHIA, FAHIMA, from Missouri, was acknowledged for her contributions as webmaster. During the business meeting portion of the conference, it was announced that IFHIMA has been incorporated in Illinois as a 501(c)(3) organization and has official non-government organization status at the World Health Organization.

During the afternoon session, all conference delegates/attendees were invited to participate in facilitated discussion groups on IFHIMA's strategic direction for 2013 and beyond. The three strategic themes focused on membership, advocacy, and knowledge domain.

The World Congress hosted educational sessions on a variety of topics on HIM practice. There were common themes: patient safety and quality, data integrity, compliance, standards, EHRs, informatics, and workforce transformation.

There are variations from country to country in the scope of HIM education, certification, and practice. Many speakers discussed the need to support the HIM profession in developing countries.

At the end of the World Congress, Skurka turned over the gavel to Angelika Haendel, from Germany, who will serve as IFHIMA president for the next three years. Marci MacDonald, from Canada, is president-elect and Fernandes was selected as regional director for the Americas.

The 18th IFHIMA Congress will be held in Tokyo, Japan in October 2016. Associate membership is open to individuals from any country. Visit www.ifhima.org for more information.

Focus on Strategy

The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan for AHIMA has been published and is available for review on the AHIMA website. AHIMA's long-term goal is "Drive the Power of Knowledge-Health Information Where and When It's Needed."

The following goals have been identified for the next three to five years:

1. Informatics: Transform Data into Health Intelligence
2. Leadership: Develop HIM Leaders Across all Healthcare Sectors
3. Information Governance: Be Recognized as the Healthcare Industry Experts in Information Governance
4. Innovation: Increase Thought Leadership and Evidence-based HIM Research
5. Public Good: Empower Consumers to Optimize their Health through Management of their Personal Health Information

Thank you to AHIMA members, volunteers, and staff who provided input into the development of this plan. Believe!

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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