

HIM: Changing Contexts, Changing Practice

Save to myBoK

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

How is the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 affecting academic medical centers? What is the likely impact of aging Baby Boomers on long term care and home care? What is contributing to the rise of complementary and alternative medicines?

This month, we focus on major trends across the healthcare industry and their impact on HIM.

Effective professionals understand and account for the larger environment when designing strategies and plans. This issue's articles offer a high-level analysis of trends to help us be more effective health information managers—regardless of the role or setting in which we work. No position is immune from the economic, demographic, social, political, and technological effects of our environment—and certainly not any position in healthcare.

We have not asked futurists for predictions about what the future will bring. Rather, we have gone to the experts on the front lines shaping change. We are proud of the breadth of contributors we have assembled for you, leading with "Megatrends You Need to Know About" by Michael Herrick and Andrew Patterson, senior healthcare practice authorities with Arthur Andersen.

Demand, Funding, Economics, and Alternatives

In "The Industry Response to Healthcare Change," Charles Roadman II, president and chief executive officer of the American Health Care Association, outlines the travails of financing long term care in the US and the public and private initiatives under way to redress the acute funding shortages in this overburdened sector. Val Halamandaris, president and chief executive officer of the National Association of Home Care, describes the drivers of growth in home care.

Those who work in this sector and the many who care for loved ones at home or in long term care facilities understand the vulnerabilities all too well.

More sophisticated information management has become a critical success factor for managing post-acute care. More than 6 percent of AHIMA's members now work in long term care and home care, and the demand for credentialed RHIAs and RHITs in these fields is growing because of PPS, new data collection demands, and the need for improved health records, including the computer-based record.

In other sectors, the influence of outside factors is also apparent. Vincent Kaval and Susan Veladi of the consulting firm Medimetrix explain the emergence of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), which is affecting hospitals and physician offices alike. Consumerism, e-health, and the high cost of traditional healthcare services are giving rise to CAM, and what was outside the mainstream is rapidly becoming integrated.

What Does All This Mean for HIM?

HIM professionals from the hospital, home care, ambulatory, and long term care sectors reflect on how these trends are affecting practice in "Changing with the Times." Full of practical advice, these colleagues explain how they set priorities, cope with change, and stay tuned in to the larger environment. Having recently completed this spring's round of Team Talks, I am struck by the courage and creativity of our members in meeting challenges head on.

One constant is our collective commitment to professional ethics. Laurinda Harman revisits our original code of ethics, first articulated in 1934, in light of today's unprecedented ethical challenges in "Confronting Ethical Dilemmas on the Job: An HIM Professional's Guide."

The spirit of our inquiry into healthcare trends is embodied in this thought: "Leadership is getting people to look beyond their own job description for ways to improve and challenge the process."¹ Our job is to improve HIM practice, and to do so, we must stay tuned in to our environment.

Note

1. Kouzes, J.M., and B.Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995, p. 35.

Article Citation:

Kloss, Linda. "HIM: Changing Contexts, Changing Practice." *Journal of AHIMA* 71, no. 5 (2000): 25.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

Copyright 2022 by The American Health Information Management Association. All Rights Reserved.