

HIM's Time to Dream Big

Save to myBoK

By Patty Thierry Sheridan, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA

This is our time to dream big. When you choose to dream big, you make a deep commitment to ideas important to you and you choose to believe in a higher purpose.

Think for a moment about those individuals who dreamed big in our society. There are so many who have inspired us, from John F. Kennedy to Martin Luther King to Helen Keller.

Who in our HIM history dreamed big?

My HIM Pioneer

The HIM pioneer that stands out for me is Grace Whiting Myers, AHIMA's first president. In the January 1912 "Bulletin of the Medical Library Association," Myers described what it was like to work in the medical records library at Mass General. She wrote:

"In this library of hospital records, there is a spirit of onward movement and a spirit of inspiration, an undercurrent of energy. And to him who cares for it all with the proper sense of his responsibilities, comes an opportunity for personal influence which may be as far-reaching as he chooses to make it. For through his efforts, it is possible to bring to light a wealth of material which might otherwise remain forever in obscurity."

In the earliest definition of our profession, Myers expressed the passion HIM professionals shared and the difference they made. She understood that organizing information was critical to avoid having such important information become obscure either by being unavailable or inaccurate.

Through the decades, the fundamental purpose of the HIM profession has not changed. HIM professionals are trained to contribute to patient care by ensuring the quality of health information and ensuring that information is complete, accurate, timely, useful, and accessible when it is needed.

What are you doing every day to live this purpose? How are you implementing health information practices to meet the unprecedented needs and uses of healthcare data?

The HIM Profession's Future

The future of the HIM profession is in our hands. Individually and collectively we must live the HIM dream in order to realize the full potential of health information in the lives of our fellow citizens.

It is time for us all to go out into the community and be recognized as a trusted source. It is time to step up and become true advocates of patients' rights, not only to fulfill our family, friends', and neighbors' request for records, but to teach our fellow citizens how to use their health information to improve their health and their experience and satisfaction within the healthcare system.

How are *you* helping your community and family become empowered users of their health information?

HIM Leadership Begins at Home

I believe HIM leadership begins at home. By bringing HIM practices close to home we will not only walk our talk, but we will also gain valuable insights on consumer-facing health information practices.

Helen Keller said, "Life is a great adventure or nothing." Not a bad motto for us to think about taking as we transform our profession together.

It is an honor to work with the talented AHIMA staff and volunteers and to serve as your president in 2012. Dream big!

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