

Implementing IG ... One Step at a Time

Save to myBoK

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Sometimes there's value in thinking big and starting small.

That idea might be of some comfort to AHIMA members who want to take up the banner for information governance (IG) but who find it hard to know where to begin.

We're not alone, as it turns out. This spring, a keynote panel at the National Conference on Managing Electronic Records compared launching an IG program to the nation's early space program. A panel of IG experts noted that "the federal government, the American public, and key stakeholders were united behind the same goal of launching a successful Apollo mission during the space race," the *Journal of AHIMA* reported. "By contrast, only a handful of stakeholders within any organization typically see the need for information governance, and they face an uphill battle in establishing their own mission control."¹

Small wonder that HIM professionals may feel overwhelmed in starting an IG program. But while we want to shoot for the moon, it may be easier to start one step at a time.

A good approach to starting IG is to find a problem, fix it, and move on. Start with a gap analysis and begin to address just one problem in your organization. It may be writing a new policy and procedure, updating record retention policies, or addressing problems in data capture.

Don't ask for permission to start. A track record of solving problems will help your organization see the value of IG; then, with a few successes, you're on your way.

This special issue of the *Journal* offers a rich selection of IG how-tos and examples for how to begin. In "[Information Governance's Next Phase](#)," Mary Butler explains how cutting-edge healthcare organizations have implemented IG programs and the results they have seen. Lesley Kadlec, MA, RHIA, and her co-authors offer a simple approach to getting off the ground in "[Getting Started with Information Governance](#)." Erin Head, MBA, RHIA, CHTS-TR, explains "[Owning the EHR and Information Governance at Your Facility](#)" with tips on how to get a seat at the table. Real-life stories of early successes and challenges with IG are highlighted by Rita Bowen, MA, RHIA, CHPS, SSGB, and her co-authors in "[IG Roundtable—Assessing Organizational Progress in Implementing IG Practices](#)." One organization shares its experiences in IG improvement in registration and release of information in "[IG from the Ground Up](#)" by Mary Beth Haugen, MS, RHIA, and Janell Madonna.

Ensuring compliance with health information exchange (HIE) participation agreement requirements, federal and state laws, and existing policies and procedures can be a daunting task. "[Policy and Procedure Considerations for Health Information Exchange Organizations](#)" provides guidance in sorting out and meeting HIE requirements.

As you know, AHIMA has developed an impressive number of resources for our information governance initiatives. This summer we've released a second white paper with results from our latest IG survey, and a new toolkit is in the works as well. Additional resources can be found at www.ahima.org to help you take your next step... or your first step in IG.

Note

¹ Butler, Mary. "Panel: Launching Information Governance Harder than Landing on the Moon." *Journal of AHIMA* website. May 18, 2015. <http://journal.ahima.org/2015/05/18/panel-launching-information-governance-harder-than-landing-on-the-moon/>.

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