

# Information Governance Case Study #10: Workforce Education

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*Editor's Note: This article is the tenth installment in an ongoing series highlighting information governance case studies.*

A key component of an organization-wide information governance (IG) program is ensuring that all staff is educated on the scope and goals of the IG program. Ensuring that staff understands its roles and responsibilities related to data and information is inherent to a successful information governance program and effectively changing the organization's culture.

Within the Information Governance Adoption Model (IGAM™), there is a competency for "Awareness and Adherence." An organization can achieve the highest level of IG maturity (level 5) when the workforce is provided role-based education that is delivered in multiple ways, is updated regularly, includes IG concepts, and assesses workforce understanding of the program.

Children's Health System of Dallas (Children's Health) embraced information governance by ensuring the workforce understood what it is, why it's important, and how it impacts the individual's performance.

## Organizational Description

Located in the Southwestern Medical District in the heart of Dallas, Children's Health is home to the only academic healthcare system in North Texas that is dedicated exclusively to the comprehensive care of children from birth to age 18. Children's Health is one of the top pediatric healthcare systems in the country and the eighth largest pediatric healthcare provider in the nation.

The system includes:

- Three hospitals with 616 beds
- 4.6 million square feet
- More than 50 subspecialty services
- More than 20 primary care clinics
- Behavioral health
- Telehealth; tele-NICU, emergency department, school-based, and community-based
- State-of-the-art emergency center
- Research program

Children's Health has more than 396,000 patient visits each year ranging from simple eye exams to specialized treatment in areas such as heart disease, hematology-oncology, organ transplantation, and cystic fibrosis. Licensed for 616 beds, the inpatient areas of the system provide patients and families with comfort and conveniences during their stay.

The hospital has five specialized critical care units, including a neonatal intensive care unit (ICU). The Dallas campus is home to the first designated Level I trauma center for pediatrics in Texas.

## Information Governance Program Description

The organization has had an IG program underway for several years. They have had success with information governance projects and have an engaged IG committee.

The value of information as an asset is essential for advancing the goals and priorities of Children's Health. Governance of clinical and operational information provides a platform for supporting improvements in quality, patient safety, and population health. Information governance allows the organization to support strategic initiatives with improvements in operational efficiency and effectiveness while reducing cost and managing risk. Information governance encompasses the people, processes, and technology required to create consistent and proper handling of information throughout the life cycle from data creation to archival while providing a framework that is irrespective of organizational structural boundaries.

A multidisciplinary committee consisting of clinicians, information technology, privacy/security, regulatory, legal, health information management, finance, and population health representatives provide subject matter expertise to oversee information governance for the organization. The multidisciplinary group is assembled as a committee. The committee reports to executive senior leadership, which has final authority when a consensus is not achieved within the information governance committee.

The information governance committee membership oversees the program adhering to IG Principles for Healthcare (IGPHC™), IGAM competencies, and core tenets with membership responsibilities, providing a solid foundation for ensuring the organization can sustain the vision and mission of the information governance program.

## Children's Health's IG Mission and Vision

The organization's state vision for IG is to view information as a valued asset that enables operational excellence, evidence-based care for patients, and preventive services to Children's Health's communities. Its mission is to establish the structure, policies, processes, and technologies to ensure that the enterprise information sustains and extends the organization's mission and goals, delivers value, complies with laws and regulations, and reflects good stewardship practices that minimize risk to stakeholders and advances the public good.

### Awareness and Adherence

The IG committee had been working on many different IG projects, but while working with the AHIMA IGAdvisors® team using the IGAM, the need to focus information governance training outside the committee was recognized. The committee determined that enterprise-wide training, including case studies, would be created and delivered to new employees during orientation as well as current employees through annual training.

The IG team began work with the chief education officer to create a program that would tie responsibilities for information and uses of information directly to employee work responsibilities at all levels of the organization. For the initial rollout, IG-specific presentations were created. The presentations were case study- and example-focused and included elements from all 10 competencies in AHIMA's IGAM.

Children's Health's job descriptions and annual performance review templates were revised to include values and an expectation of commitment around information. A section of the annual performance evaluation is devoted to measurement of employee actions around information accountabilities that support organizational values of selfless services, passionate advocacy, commitment to excellence, and unwavering integrity.

The IG team wrote articles focused on various aspects of IG with direct reference to these organizational values. The articles tied Children's Health's values to IG and were written in plain language to help employees clearly understand their impact on the initiative and how to engage in solid IG. The internal communication department incorporated the articles into the monthly productions enterprise-wide. The materials are available to leaders for IG department-focused communication and training. An example of an article with ties to Children's Health's values is patient privacy and commitment to "passionate advocacy." The IG program provided a pragmatic platform for employees to clearly understand how they live the organization's values while supporting strategic initiatives with IG.

## Organizational Impact of IG Program

The mandatory workforce IG education program at Children's Health is augmented with periodic, proactive, and specific awareness and training targeting special needs of the team or business unit. Role-based IG education is delivered via multiple

methods and platforms to better serve all members of the workforce. The educational program is continuously updated in accordance with the organization's IG strategy and program. The educational program offers a comprehensive review of all IG competencies.

Information governance case study training is performed through the organization's learning management system (LMS) for new employee on-boarding and annual training. The case studies included:

### How Does Information Governance Relate to Me?

- **Clinical**

- Medication errors focused on pediatric weights
- Incomplete family history delays diagnosing
- Inaccurate family history leading to excessive diagnostic tests

- **Patient Identity**

- Two records intermingled resulting in patient allergies not being recognized
- Duplicate medical records resulting in medication being ordered when the patient is allergic
- Inability to link medical records in exchange with other organizations resulting in additional testing, expense, and discomfort to patient

- **Population Health**

- Accurate, specific diagnoses used to determine the needs of the community—asthma outreach, telemedicine, capturing data geographically for primary care clinics and telemedicine partnerships

- **Capturing trauma information**

- Infant and child car seat compliance
- Home swimming pool safety

## Benefits Realized

Information is an asset and awareness of the value of information organization-wide is important. This process is leading to conversations at committee meetings about transparency as well as use of data and information to improve operational performance while maintaining competitive advantage. This program has created the structure to have these conversations.

Future benefits should include risk reduction as employees increase understanding of the importance of protecting and valuing information.

Through use of AHIMA's IGHealthRate™, the platform for IGAM, the organization has revised policies, procedures, and practices, and has implemented workforce training to augment and support the move toward a more mature IG program. The IGAM competency "Awareness and Adherence" drives workforce engagement in the IG program and ensures that everyone understands their role-specific accountabilities for trustworthy information.

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