

Keeping up with the HIM Transformation

Save to myBoK

by Bryon Pickard, MBA, RHIA

The first six months of my presidency have been a whirlwind of activity, and I have already logged a surplus of frequent flyer miles.

Earlier this year, during one of multiple trips to Washington, DC, I attended a meeting of the American Health Information Community, the national advisory panel created to accelerate the development and adoption of health IT. One agenda item that really caught my attention was the possibility that future differential reimbursement to providers could be tied directly to the use of certified electronic health records (EHRs).

The Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) sets the gold standard for EHR products and helps advance the adoption of much-needed standards and interoperability. To date, nearly 90 different ambulatory EHR products have been certified, and plans are under way to begin certification of inpatient EHRs. If your organization is not already using a certified EHR, let me encourage you to start asking why not.

Time to Walk the Walk

We have yet to reach a tipping point in EHR use throughout the country, and privacy and security issues still need to be ironed out. However, organizations no longer see technology as a barrier for EHR adoption. Therefore, we can expect greater collaboration and information sharing among healthcare stakeholders and users of health information.

Already we are seeing health information exchange and telemedicine extend well beyond today's institutional care settings. The same information technology that renders walls and borders obsolete for financial transactions is transforming healthcare and reinventing HIM.

AHIMA recognizes that each member of the professional community plays an important part in the healthcare transformation. The association, long recognized for advancing HIM knowledge and practice, advocates personal professional development and lifelong learning and provides the necessary tools and resources for individuals to succeed.

10 Must Dos

I know many of you have already attended your state association annual meeting this year and heard an AHIMA presentation describing how HIM is being reinvented. The presentation talks about how best to succeed in a changing world and includes important action steps individuals can take.

For those of you who were unable to attend, here's a list from the presentation of what we all can do to keep current:

1. Become familiar about health information exchange in your state or community
2. Champion data standards and information integrity
3. Make sure you are developing the skills and experiences you will need
4. Study e-HIM® practice and reimagine workflow
5. Learn about the criteria being used by CCHIT to certify EHR products
6. Get a handle on the legal health record
7. Share what you know
8. Help people start personal health records
9. Start your own personal health record
10. Be an agent of change

The more we as individual members network and take advantage of the tools and resources that are available to educate ourselves and others, the more powerful and effective the change. That is what makes AHIMA great.

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Article citation:

Pickard, Bryon. "Keeping up with the HIM Transformation" *Journal of AHIMA* 78, no.7 (July 2007): 8.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

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