

# Managing the Master Patient Index in an Integrated Delivery System (Resolution)

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Resolution from the 1997 House of Delegates

## Background Information

An accurate master patient (person) index (MPI), whether in paper or electronic format, may be considered the most important resource in a healthcare facility because it is the link that tracks patient, person, or member activity within an organization (or enterprise) and across patient care settings.

A MPI may identify the following:

- Patients who have been treated in a facility or enterprise
- Members
- Physicians
- Staff
- Guarantors
- Payers
- Employees
- Persons

Today most MPIs are computerized. Information may be kept permanently on computer or offloaded to other media for long-term storage. The MPI lists the medical record or identification number associated with the name and must contain enough demographic data to readily identify a patient and his or her record. If the MPI serves more than one healthcare facility, the index should also indicate the facility in which the admission or encounter occurred.

As the key to locating and linking records, a complete, accurate MPI is a critical part of the patient information system in healthcare organizations.

## Resolution

<b>Topic:</b>	Managing the Master Patient Index in an Integrated Delivery System
<b>Intent:</b>	Ensure accurate patient or member identification utilizing a master patient (person) index in an integrated delivery system
<b>Addressed to:</b>	All HIM professionals and AHIMA's strategic partners
<b>Originator:</b>	AHIMA MPI Task Force
<b>Approved by:</b>	1997 House of Delegates
<b>Date:</b>	October 19, 1997

Whereas, the MPI continues to be an important resource for patient care, industry trends, and data analysis;

Whereas, patient care may be compromised if the patient cannot be identified to access all of his or her health information;

Whereas, the role of the MPI is more critical than ever due to: increasing reliance on computerized patient information; integration of healthcare delivery systems (including the establishment of multihospital systems and vertical integration of hospitals, physician practices, home care agencies, long term care, and other nonacute facilities); and development of community health information networks;

Whereas, the MPI has become the key to electronic data repositories and the integration of computer-based clinical, financial, and demographic data across the continuum of care;

Whereas, the healthcare industry continues to consolidate and integrate, and expectations for accurate computer-based information are increasing; and

Whereas, AHIMA, its state component associations, and specialty groups encourage healthcare and public health organizations, health insurers, and other appropriate parties to make protecting the privacy of patient health information an organization's priority; therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That AHIMA educate HIM and other healthcare professionals to devote the necessary resources for integrating and supporting MPIs that consistently and correctly identify their patients or members while protecting their privacy and collaborate with other strategic partners to promote awareness of the need for information contained in an organization's MPI to be complete, accurate, and maintained in a way that protects its integrity; and

*Resolved*, That AHIMA and its component groups work to develop MPI standards and models and provide leadership in their facilities and in the healthcare industry to ensure complete and accurate MPIs.

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