

Paving the Way for a New Generation: Bringing HIM Skills to the Emerging World of Health Information Exchange

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Health information exchange continues to evolve as the federal government and states launch initiatives promoting technology, interoperability, standards utilization, and harmonization. One of these, the State Health Information Exchange Cooperative Agreement Program, is the center of a federal-state initiative to spur HIE breakthroughs.

Through the HIE Challenge Grant Program, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT awarded \$16 million in grants to encourage HIE innovations that support nationwide health information exchange. The program provided funding to 10 State HIE Cooperative Agreement Program participants for the development of innovative and scalable solutions in five key areas:

- Achieving specific health goals
- Improving care transitions
- Exchanging consumer-mediated information
- Enhancing querying for patient care
- Fostering distributed population-level analytics

Do you know the status of the HIE implementation plans in your state?

HIM Expertise Critical to HIEs

State HIE initiatives present HIM professionals with tremendous opportunities to expand the HIM footprint and create a new awareness of HIM expertise in maintaining confidentiality and security of patient information, using and maintaining data and information, and managing terminologies.

I encourage you to introduce yourself and the HIM profession to the HIE in your community, attend planning meetings, and volunteer to serve on a committee. The advancement of the HIM profession is up to each one of us, so get out there and spread the word that HIM professionals are the subject matter experts.

The industry needs us to collaborate with HIEs to define new data exchange models and identify the specific and appropriate data to be exchanged based on the HIE's mission, vision, purpose, and goals. HIEs require standards that ensure acceptable data quality and processes to measure it.

We also have the skills and knowledge to assess the process that is in place or in development to capture patient identity and its consistency across each of the HIE's participating organizations.

Embrace the Health IT Movement

The many moving parts and goals of the health IT transformation remind me of the beauty of the continually shifting pattern of shapes and colors in a kaleidoscope.

Take time out to reflect on your accomplishments and enjoy the transformation process. Appreciate the changes and recognize the monumental contributions you are making to redefine the HIM world as we know it. Support each other in the shifting patterns of our work and celebrate every HIM success with your colleagues.

I am very proud of the HIM profession for embracing new IT knowledge and managing the many initiatives required for health IT adoption and HIE interoperability. What you are doing every day has never been done before. You are paving the

way for the next generation of HIM professionals.

Thank you for your dedication and positive spirit in a landscape of unknowns and a world of exciting change, which will ultimately enable the success of HIEs and health IT.

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