

# Recognizing the Value of HIM

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by Karen Czirr, MS, RHIA

HIM professionals make significant contributions to patient care, public health, and a healthcare facility's bottom line. Although the HIM professionals at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia were busy implementing HIPAA and computer-based patient records, directing data quality, preventing fraud and abuse, and much more, we made time to celebrate our contributions and innovations during National Health Information and Technology Week 2000. We wanted to educate the people we work with and the general public about how important our job is to the quality of their healthcare.

We formed a planning committee with two supervisors and one manager and began bi-monthly meetings in early August. As plans progressed, we asked HIM employees for their input.

## Educating Our Colleagues

HI&T Week activities were centered around educating others about HIM and having a little fun at the same time. We hung the HI&T Week banner in the hospital lobby for visitors as well as employees and clinical staff to see. We also placed an easel and flip chart at the entrance to the HIM department to provide daily reminders of events' times and locations.

To educate our colleagues, we held a storyboard contest for HIM employees to explain their jobs in words, pictures, and signs. Two posters were displayed each day during HI&T Week under the banner in the lobby. Prominent hospital personnel served as judges for our storyboard contest and prizes were awarded at the end of the week.

## Making HIM Fun

To inject a little fun in the week, we organized games for all three shifts of employees with prizes for first- and second-place winners. We contacted our vendors for a variety of items to give away and bundled several pieces to use as first and second prize winners for games.

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the HIM department sponsored presentations. All staff was invited, attendees received snacks, and handouts were provided for those who could not attend. CE credits were offered for the Monday and Friday presentations, and each speaker was presented with a small token of thanks, such as a T-shirt, tote bag, or mug.

On Monday, the topic was "How to Take Care of ME in This Busy World." The speaker was a clinical psychologist responsible for the diversity and life balance program at the hospital. During this presentation, we verbalized what makes us feel valued as a person, whether employee, spouse, parent, child, etc. We also shared ways each of us takes or makes time for ourselves. Wednesday's topic was "Saving for a Rainy Day," and featured a speaker from Philadelphia National Bank. On Friday, the topic was "Acupuncture: An Alternative Medicine Modality." The speaker was a licensed acupuncturist from New York City. Each session attendee received a scented votive candle wrapped in small squares of colorful cloth. HIM department members hosted a luncheon one day, bringing in specialty foods and beverages.

A creative employee made postcards from the HI&T Week logo. The postcard was inserted into an individual photo stand that was presented to each employee on Monday morning. After HI&T week, the stands continue to be used for favorite photos. In addition, each department member received a long-sleeved knit polo shirt embroidered with the department name and hospital.

The storyboards really captured everyone's attention and were a fun way to educate our colleagues. And the activities and awards allowed us to recognize HIM employees for all their hard work. Overall, our 2000 HI&T Week was a big success.

*Karen Czirr is the information security manager for The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Her department was one of the winners of AHIMA's 2000 National Health Information and Technology Week contest. To enter this year's*

*contest for National Health Information and Technology Week, visit our Web site at [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org) beginning the week of October 29, 2001.*

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