

Spreading the PHR Message: New Campaign Highlights the Role of PHRs and HIM Professionals in Healthcare

Save to myBoK

by Wendy Mangin, MS, RHIA

By now I hope everyone has heard or seen an “It’s HI Time America” radio spot or public service announcement. This FORE-sponsored public service campaign was launched January 28 and will continue rolling out across the country throughout the first half of 2008.

The centerpiece of the campaign is a short documentary on personal health records (PHRs) that has aired on cable news networks (CNN, MSNBC, FOX) and local public television outlets. Briefer TV and radio public service announcements featuring veteran TV personality John Walsh are also airing in the top 250 and 450 media markets (respectively) through June.

New and Improved myPHR.com

AHIMA’s consumer Web site myPHR.com also has undergone a complete overhaul. The long list of improvements includes a video of the public service announcement and a shorter version of the documentary.

The site continues to offer valuable advice about patients’ information rights and the value of PHRs, including practical tips and approaches to organizing personal health information and important links to relevant and reliable information resources.

If you haven’t checked out the new and improved myPHR.com, please do so. You’ll find an intuitive, engaging site that clearly highlights the benefits of a PHR. Editable forms and a streamlined process can be used to develop and store PHRs. The new site also makes a stronger connection to AHIMA.

Another exciting feature is streaming video featuring personal testimonials. You will see faces you recognize, our own members, discussing how PHRs helped save lives or avoid unnecessary repeated tests.

Taking the PHR Campaign to the Public

The other critical pieces of this campaign are the AHIMA members who serve as community education coordinators. I think it is thrilling how many of our members have worked hard in their communities to promote the PHR to consumers. In one video clip on the Web site a member states, “I feel it is my job as a credentialed professional in my own community to promote this.”

Other HIM professionals in the testimonials discuss how consumers have the right to manage their own care and ask for copies of their health information. It is this patient advocacy that makes the campaign so unique.

Taking the Campaign to Our Facilities

Physicians are seeing more informed patients enter the exam room with their PHRs in hand. At my hospital, we had our first patient present to the emergency room with a PHR on a flash drive.

In all our facilities, we need to work with our IT professionals to accept this media and make it available for our caregivers. If we are doing our job promoting PHRs to the consumer, we will continue to see more of these patients enter our doors, bringing with them valuable information about their own health.

It is high time for all HIM professionals to fully support this important initiative. Do your part by educating consumers in your own community and your loved ones. After all, knowledge is power, and it is our job as credentialed professionals to promote the PHR to all who will listen.

Wendy Mangin (wmangin@gshvin.org) is director of the medical records department at Good Samaritan Hospital in Vincennes, IN.

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