

Summer 2012 Introduction

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by Guest Editor LaShunda B. Smith, MSM, RHIA, CHDA

Education can be defined as teaching or receiving an acquired body of knowledge. Deciding the right way to best educate a particular audience can be complex at times given the various learning styles, skills, and abilities of our diverse population.

Better educated health consumers lead to more informed decision makers in their personal healthcare. The exchange of health information in a private, secure way grants access to providers that improves a patient's overall quality of life and; what better way to make things of this nature happen than through educating the stakeholders. Furthermore, teaching a new generation of leaders in HIM helps the field to attain AHIMA's Vision 2016 in HIM education.

This issue of *Perspectives in Health Information Management* highlights several HIM educational themes addressing the multifaceted field of health information technology such as course development and workforce characteristics, influencing consumers through education and information technology research, and putting education into action.

The authors of "Developing a Capstone Course within a Health Informatics Program" discuss the importance of creating a well-designed educational course that could ultimately lead to future student employment. The article "Factors Influencing Students to Enroll in Health Information Management Programs" examines specific characteristics that encourage students to enroll in educational programs in HIM. "Student Participation and Interactivity using Asynchronous Computer-mediated Communication for Resolution of an Undergraduate Capstone Management Case Study" examines how a more hands-on approach, through a carefully designed online course, better educates students and equips them with practical knowledge as if they were in the field.

The authors of "Evaluation of Dengue-related Health Information on the Internet" discuss the importance of educating consumers about the validity of information found on the Internet. "Health Information Exchange: Metrics to Address Quality of Care and Return on Investment" shows why the evaluation of benefits of using the HIE and metrics should be created to gauge the benefits of having an HIE, thus, creating a better quality of care for patients. The article "Motivating, Influencing, and Persuading Patients through Personal Health Records: A Scoping Review" gives insight on how patients found the PHR to be helpful, which leads to a more informed and decision equipped consumer population. The authors of "Racial Differences in the Usage of Information Technology: Evidence from a National Physician Survey" discuss the racial differences in the use of IT among physicians.

This issue of *Perspectives* highlights articles that demonstrate how the field of HIM and related educational programming addresses healthcare information and training that reaches across the nation.

LaShunda B. Smith, MSM, RHIA, CHDA, is an Associate Professor and Director of the Division of Continuing and Distance Education/Summer School and also serves as the Director of the Health Informatics Management and Systems Program at Tougaloo College in Jackson, MS.

Article citation:

Smith, LaShunda Blanding. "Summer 2012 Introduction" *Perspectives in Health Information Management* (Summer, July 2012).

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