

# Vision 2016 and Beyond

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## House of Delegates Keeps Eye on Future

Members of AHIMA's House of Delegates voted on resolutions and discussed issues that will have far-reaching implications for all members in years to come.

The House voted on three resolutions related to HIM issues. The group also discussed strategic issues during issue forums.

## Three Resolutions Passed

The group approved the "Proposed Resolution for e-HIM® Professional Standards," which proposes that AHIMA evaluate and develop professional practice standards for e-HIM. The resolution was written by the Tennessee Health Information Management Association.

Next, the resolution "Quality Data and Documentation in the EHR" was approved. This resolution, developed by AHIMA's Physician Practice Council, urges that HIM professionals actively participate and contribute to organizations that develop standards to ensure that EHR data and documentation meet the needs of healthcare organizations.

Finally, delegates approved "Ensuring the Future of the HIM Profession through Vision 2016: A Blueprint for Quality Education in Health Information Management." The resolution, submitted by Tennessee educators, the Tennessee HIMA Board of Directors, and the AHIMA Education Strategy Committee, addresses points raised in the "Vision 2016" white paper on education published by AHIMA in September. A motion to postpone a vote on the resolution for 90 days was defeated.

## Work Groups Explore Five Strategic Issues

During the issue forums, delegates broke into small groups to discuss issues of strategic importance to members and the association. They discussed five issues:

- House of Delegates structure and development
- Vision 2016: A Blueprint for Quality Education in HIM
- Accreditation and certification governance
- Certification program development
- HIM global trends

AHIMA president Bryon Pickard emphasized that the focus of the discussions should not be on immediate action, but on providing guidance on issues of importance to the association. "We're not going to take action on these topics today, but we want to talk about a suggested timeline," he said. Each issue forum was asked to consider the question "what is needed to move forward?" as part of their discussions.

Each group produced a summary of feedback, which was reported to the House. This feedback will provide AHIMA's Board of Directors and the members with direction on positions and priorities for the profession and the association.

A sampling of these comments is included below (see "What They Said"). The complete presentation will be available online in the State Leaders/House of Delegates Community of Practice, at [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org).

## Looking Ahead to a "Challenging Year"

In addition to the action items, the group also heard AHIMA CEO Linda Kloss's annual report, in which she gave a snapshot of the "state of the health of AHIMA" and the Foundation of Research and Education. Kloss described AHIMA's strategic

plan and goals, as well as those of FORE, and gave an account of its finances.

In a preview of 2008, Kloss said, “We think a challenging year is coming up for us,” but that the association is well positioned to meet the challenges, which include the national election and the advancement of HIM issues in the spotlight at the national and state levels.

In addition, the members of the 2008 nominating committee were announced. They are:

- Jill Callahan Dennis, chair
- Cheryl Gregg Farenholz
- Clark Chafin
- Katherine Byrd
- Kelly Milam
- Stacey McIntosh

Wrapping up the meeting, Pickard reminded the group that its work goes on year-round. “We now share the responsibility to advance our association and profession through all the changes before us,” he said. “To be an effective association, we must continue working on important issues all year long. ... Working together, we’ll create a brighter future.”

The House of Delegates meets year-round electronically via AHIMA’s State Leaders and HoD Community of Practice, which is open to all members. All members can join this community by logging on at [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org).

## What They Said

Here’s a sampling of the comments and suggestions summarized from the issue forum discussions.

**House of Delegates structure and development:** Discussed a proposal to divide the House into six work groups or teams. This would be the first major change to its structure since 1979.

- Participants generally agreed to the proposed change.
- Teams would need charges, standardized processes, and the ability to refine their focus.
- Transition to a new structure could be incremental.
- Team structure should be implemented before apportionment is changed.

**Vision 2016:** A Blueprint for Quality Education in HIM: Provided suggestions on the recently published white paper on education (also addressed in the resolution).

- Explore impact on coding certificate programs
- Look at skills coders will need in 2016
- Develop career paths to help people better plan their education
- Create a formal mentoring program
- Need to move sooner than 2016

**Accreditation and certification governance:** Discussed steps required for the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) to achieve recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

- General support for changes recommended to give CAHIIM the needed independence and accountability to achieve recognition, including authority over accreditation standards
- Governance changes would be made to elevate, distinguish, and differentiate the profession

**Certification program development:** Discussed feasibility of AHIMA developing specialty credentials, including a proposed “health data analyst” certification.

- Consider time limit to exam eligibility after graduation
- Educate members about the results of the master’s job analysis

- Distinguish the RHIT and RHIA from specialty credentials
- Ensure the title “health data analyst” captures the essence of the work

**HIM global trends:** Explored the possibility of an expanded AHIMA international presence.

- The biggest risk may lie in not acting
- Look for areas where HIM skills may be in demand (telemedicine, health information exchange, fraud prevention)
- Learn best practices from other countries as well
- Consider whether an international organization would be a separate entity from AHIMA
- Another name change for AHIMA could be necessary

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