



**PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
HANDBOOK AND APPLICATION
FY2003**



American Health Information Management Association
Foundation of Research and Education
233 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2150
Chicago, IL 60601-5800

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Practice Solutions

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Practice Solutions and Best Practice Awards

Introduction: Purpose of the Practice Solutions and Best Practice Awards Programs

The Practice Solutions and Best Practice Awards, funded through AHIMA's Foundation of Research and Education (FORE), have been developed to encourage and promote the sharing of information among health information management professionals. The Awards program, and its associated Clearinghouse, is intended to facilitate the exchange of ideas and solutions that positively impact our practice, the healthcare systems we work in, and the patients we serve.

Having practical, comparative information supports AHIMA members on critical workplace issues. Useful in planning, decision-making, and daily operations, practice solutions and best practices can be an invaluable source of benchmarking data that enriches the entire profession. Through the Awards program, AHIMA provides professional recognition to those who are developing these important practice improvements.

Practice Solutions and Best Practices: Which Submission Is Right for You?

Currently, FORE sponsors two kinds of awards, both of which recognize initiatives that lead to improvements in the practice of health information management:

Practice Solutions are fully implemented programs that have had a positive impact on the daily practice of HIM. These programs may have led to quality or process improvement, improved efficiency, lowered costs, or otherwise addressed a particular problem in the HIM workplace.

Best Practices are fully implemented programs that meet or set new standards or introduce innovations in the management of health information. These practices have been benchmarked and tested, and outcomes have been carefully measured, evaluated and documented. Best Practices will generally have broad impact and applicability within a particular HIM practice setting or across the profession.

Projects vary greatly in the scale, impact, and documentation required for submission for award consideration. The table below compares the minimum standards that must be met for a project to be considered in each award category.

Project Minimum Standards Comparison

Standards	Practice Solution	Best Practice
Implementation	Project is fully implemented	Project is fully implemented and has demonstrated sustainable benefits
Innovation	Primary emphasis is on efficacy	Project is innovative, includes innovative elements, or implements known information in new ways
Financial Impact	Project uses available resources efficiently. Expenses are appropriate to the degree of benefit achieved	Project has demonstrable positive impact on cost and resource efficiency. Expenses are appropriate to the degree of benefit achieved
HIM Impact	Project has a positive impact on practice within the setting or practice category in which it was implemented	Project has broad impact, applicability, and benefits to HIM practice that is adaptable beyond the setting in which it was implemented
Evaluation/ Documentation	Project outcomes and benefits have been measured, evaluated, and documented	Project outcomes have been rigorously measured, evaluated, and documented
Benchmarks	Benchmarking is recommended but not required	Benchmarking is required. Project results should meet or exceed current standards or set new standards

Please consider the above minimum standards in determining which award submission is right for you.

Eligibility

To qualify for an award, the award applicant must be an active, associate, or student member of AHIMA. The practice submitted must apply to the field of health information management. Practices must also relate to a member’s own practice environment or to an environment in which they have working knowledge, provided it is managed by an AHIMA member. Multiple entries are permitted and encouraged. Entries submitted by eligible individuals become the sole property of AHIMA and may be published, in whole or in part, in the Journal of AHIMA or in other Association publications or on the Association Web site.

Awards

Practice Solutions

Practice Solutions will be recognized in two ways. Solutions that are accepted after review will be placed in the Best Practices Clearinghouse on the AHIMA Web site. Accepted Practice Solution submissions will also be presented with a \$250 cash award.

Priority Areas

The general topic areas below are considered to be integral to the vitality, visibility, and success of the health profession and the health information manager. Innovation in these areas are considered priorities in advancing the health information management field:

Data Quality	Compliance
Vocabularies	CPR Implementation
HIM Management	Productivity
Coding	Privacy
Information Security	Quality Management
HIPAA	E-health

Application Deadlines

Practice Solutions

Applications for Practice Solutions will be accepted on a quarterly basis. Deadlines for receipt of applications are March 28, June 27, September 26 and December 5, 2003. Award notification will take place within two months of the application deadline.

Application Availability

Award applications are available on the AHIMA Web site at www.ahima.org. For further information, contact FORE at (312) 233-1100, or at fore@ahima.org.

General Guidelines for Material Submission

Practice Solution and Best Practice Awards submissions require that documents be submitted as hard copy **and** on disk. Hard copy and disks should be submitted together in a single package. *E-mail submissions will not be accepted.* Please follow the guidelines below in preparing your materials:

Hard Copy Documents

All text documents should be submitted on disk and as a hard copy printout. Standard 8 _ x 11 inch paper should be used if possible.

Software Requirements

Required File Formats for Abstracts and Best Practice Reports:

Microsoft Word or WordPerfect

Acceptable File Formats for Supporting Materials (in addition to the above):

HTML, Adobe Acrobat (PDF), Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher, QuarkXpress, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, or Macromedia Freehand

Acceptable Disk Types

3.5-inch diskettes, 100mb Zip Disks, CD-ROM

Format Requirements

- Standard 8 _ x 11 inch paper
- 12-point type
- Double spaced
- 1-inch margins required
- Single-side printing

How to Submit Your Practice Solution

Practice Solutions are fully implemented programs that have had a positive impact on the daily practice of HIM. These programs may have improved efficiency, lowered costs, or addressed a particularly stubborn problem in the HIM workplace.

General Instructions

- 1) Read through the complete set of instructions below.
- 2) Prepare your Practice Solutions Abstract, following the instructions below.
- 3) Prepare your Supporting Materials, following the instructions below.
- 4) Complete the Practice Solutions and Best Practice Awards Application Cover Sheet completely (see Attachment 1).
- 5) Prepare your Application Package, assuring that it includes the following items:
 - Completed Application Cover Sheet
 - Practice Solutions Abstract (hard copy and disk)
 - Supporting Materials (hard copy and disk, if appropriate)
- 6) Send your complete Application Package, including **all** of the above to:

AHIMA Foundation of Research and Education
ATTN: Practice Solutions
233 N. Michigan Ave.
Suite 2150
Chicago, IL 60601-5800

Preparing the Practice Solutions Abstract

The Abstract is an important component of your submission. In addition to serving as the primary document for the review process, the Abstract will also be included on the AHIMA Web site in the Best Practices Clearinghouse. It will provide a detailed summary to those using the site to help them determine if the program described is applicable to their needs before they proceed to the longer Supporting Materials section.

Abstracts should not exceed **500 words** and are required to include the following information:

- Program or practice title
- Description of the impetus for developing this program
- Program goals or objectives
- Planning and implementation highlights
- Description of how the program was evaluated
- Description of the programs benefits and/or positive outcomes

Preparing Supporting Materials for Practice Solutions

Supporting Materials are an essential part of your program submission. The purpose of the supporting materials is to document your Practice Solution so that others can obtain a complete understanding of how your program was structured and implemented. The actual content of Supporting Materials will vary depending upon the nature of your program. The following list is intended to provide examples of the kinds of materials you may wish to include:

- Guidelines or policies
- Program checklists
- Forms and other documentation tools
- Graphs, tables or charts
- Reference sources used in your research or program implementation

In submitting your Supporting Materials, please adhere to the **General Guidelines for Material Submission** described on page 4.

Practice Solutions Review and Notification Process

Preliminary Review

The purpose of the preliminary review is to ensure that all the required components of the application have been submitted in accordance with the guidelines. This review is conducted by Foundation staff. If the application meets the preliminary review criteria, it will be forwarded to the Review Committee. Applicants will be notified that their submission has been received, has passed the preliminary review and has been submitted to the committee. If the application does not meet minimum criteria, the submission will be returned to the applicant with a letter noting the missing elements. The applicant may correct the missing elements and re-submit their application at a later date.

Content Review

Practice Solution submissions are reviewed by an internal committee of content experts made up of AHIMA Professional Practice staff with expertise in the appropriate areas. The purpose of the Content Review is to ensure that the submission meets the following criteria:

- Addresses an issue which impacts the practice of HIM
- Includes clearly defined goals or objectives
- Clearly demonstrates and describes full implementation
- Includes program evaluation and measures of success
- Demonstrates measurable benefits and/or positive outcomes

Notification

Applicants will be notified of acceptance of their Practice Solution and of their award within two months of their submission.



**PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
APPLICATION FORM**

Complete the following information. Please type or print legibly.

Project Title: _____

Principal Author's Name: _____ AHIMA Member ID # _____

Institution Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email Address: _____

Additional Author(s): _____

Please provide a brief (50 words or less) summary of your program/practice: _____

Please read and sign the following statement:

I, _____ (*print your full name*) grant to AHIMA and its Foundation of Research and Education non-exclusive rights to the publication of the enclosed work, relating to the above referenced Project Title, on the Best Practice Clearinghouse Web site of AHIMA for distribution over the global Internet. I certify that the work presented is original and that publication of this information does not violate any previous contracts. I am empowered to sign for and accept responsibility for releasing this material on behalf of all co-authors. I hereby waive all claims for royalties in connection with stated publication.

Signed _____ Date _____