



**news**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AHIMA Presents HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division with 2019 Grace Award**

*The award recognizes an outstanding organization's journey toward innovative HIM practices that improve patient outcomes*

CHICAGO – August 12, 2019 – The [American Health Information Management Association](#) (AHIMA) has named [Hospital Sisters Health System \(HSHS\)](#) - Eastern Wisconsin Division—which includes HSHS St. Vincent Hospital and HSHS St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center in Green Bay; HSHS St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan; and HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital in Oconto Falls—as this year's AHIMA Grace Award recipient. The award, which is named after AHIMA's founder, Grace Whiting Myers, honors organizations that demonstrate excellence in health information management (HIM). AHIMA will present HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division with this honor at the AHIMA Health Data and Information Conference in Chicago on September 17.

More than 90 years ago, AHIMA founder, Grace Whiting Myers, acted on a sincere conviction to improve the quality of the nation's health records by founding the association. AHIMA continues the annual recognition of the Grace Award to honor healthcare delivery organizations for their innovative and novel approaches to using HIM to deliver high-quality care to patients.

"HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division is honored to accept the prestigious AHIMA Grace Award," said Therese Pandl, president and CEO, HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division. "This award exemplifies the commitment our health information management team shows day in and day out, in the spirit of providing our patients the highest quality of care possible as they continue to seek new and innovative ways to use the electronic medical record."

HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division's achievements in HIM excellence include:

- The use of demographic information, patient population and diagnoses to determine if additional services should be offered, and whether patient population needs could be accommodated
- Using data to support the decision to open a wound clinic, increase the number of ICU rooms, increase X-ray capacity, open an intermediate care unit and update the ICU and

expand surgical services to include up-to-date technology and telemedicine implementation

- Creating an inpatient clinical dashboard within the electronic medical record or monitoring of patient care helping identify the status of patients in real-time by recognizing trends in care and allowing staff to appropriately order supplies and medications
- Implementing an electronic query process allowing physicians to answer questions directly helping reduce physician queries for procedure documentation by 90 percent for patients with transcatheter aortic valve replacements (TAVR)
- Developing a mortality chart review process reducing the observed-to-expected mortality rate to less than 1 percent

The Division is also recognized for decreasing denials by 20 percent in six months, saving \$50,000 in software expenses due to identified edits, improving the Division's case mix index within the last year by increasing benchmark goals by 18 percent, making bedside iPads available for patients and family members to see upcoming appointments and procedures and leading the conversation regarding inclusion of LGBT information in the electronic medical record to improve patient safety and quality of care.

HIM professionals at HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division led this work by initiating conversations, facilitating inter-departmental groups, serving as resources and educating colleagues.

"We are proud to recognize the efforts of our members and the contributions HIM makes to overall patient care," said AHIMA CEO Wylecia Wiggs Harris, PhD, CAE. "The Grace Award honors the extraordinary, and that is what HSHS - Eastern Wisconsin Division is—extraordinary. They have demonstrated HIM excellence in leadership and innovation by improving processes leading to enhanced patient safety and data integrity."

Award evaluation criteria included how organizations' HIM professionals demonstrate or promote leadership by volunteering or leading within their organization or community or help develop other HIM professionals by serving as educators, as well as how the organization demonstrates professional achievement and supports and contributes to innovation.

AHIMA also recognizes [Hennepin Healthcare](#) with an honorable mention for accomplishments in seeking growth opportunities to serve as transformational leaders and for using innovative practices to eliminate manual work, reporting mortality statistics and improving the case mix index.

A committee of judges, representing healthcare delivery organizations, health information professionals and HIM associations, selects the Grace Award. This year's judges are:

- (CHAIR) Sandra Pearson, MHA, RHIA, CHDA, CPEHR  
CDI & Data Governance Director, SCL Health
- Shelly Asbury, CCS, CCS-P  
Director, Physician Coding Compliance, JSA Healthcare
- Kenneth Clyburn, RHIA, CHPS

Health Information Services Director, Beaufort Memorial Hospital

- Elizabeth Curtis, MA, RHIA, CHPS, FAHIMA  
Administrative Director, Medical Information Management, The Ohio State University  
Wexner Medical Center
- Kyle McElroy, MS, RHIA  
Corporate Associate Vice President of HIM Operations, IASIS Healthcare
- Indra Osi, RHIA, CHP  
Enterprise Director Facility Coding and Reimbursement  
Cleveland Clinic

Previous Grace Award recipients include:

- 2018: [Yale New Haven Health](#)
- 2017: [SCL Health](#)
- 2016: [The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center](#)
- 2015: [Allina Health of Minneapolis](#)
- 2014: [Children's Medical Center of Dallas](#)
- 2013: [Truman Medical Centers \(TMC\)](#)
- 2012: [University of Wisconsin Hospital and Health System](#)

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### **About AHIMA**

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 103,000 health information professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for best practices in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA's mission is to empower people to impact health. [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org)