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Best Practices for Mobile Health? There’s an APP Guide For That
AHIMA Develops a Best Practice Primer for Consumers

CHICAGO – April 24, 2013 – All health-related apps are not created equal. To help consumers make smart choices and ask the right questions before downloading health-related applications to monitor for a specific medical condition or just to improve overall health and wellbeing, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) developed the Just Think App Mobile Health Apps 101: A Primer for Consumers.

The guide is posted to my myPhr.com, an AHIMA website that offers consumers guidance on how to set up and manage their personal health information.

As mobile health continues to grow exponentially, the AHIMA guide provides key questions for consumers to consider when evaluating the merits of a specific app.

“Mobile health can be an effective tool for consumers to become more connected and engaged in their own healthcare,” said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. “At the same time, consumers must be educated and make sure the apps they are using keep their personal health information private and secure. This guide gives consumers insight into what they should consider when making decisions about health apps.”

Some of the key recommendations the guide makes to ensure the privacy and security of personal health information include:

- Review privacy settings of the app and your mobile device; know your options and what the default settings are.
- Read the app’s privacy policy to determine how the app collects data, who has access to it and how it is used.
- Use password protection and encryption.
- Record your phone’s identifier somewhere safe and know how to use a remote wipe which will erase your data if your device is lost or stolen.
- Remember that texting is not secure; do not share confidential and personal health information via text.

Marsha Dolan, MBA, RHIA, FAHIMA, co-chair of AHIMA’s Consumer Health Practice Council, said apps can be particularly valuable for consumers with a chronic condition such as diabetes.
“A sound app can give the consumer a way to easily track their daily condition and keep all the information in one convenient place, which can then be shared directly with their doctor,” Dolan said.

The new guide is just one of many tools available for consumers and on myPHR.com.

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About AHIMA
Celebrating its 85th anniversary this year, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 67,000 educated health information management professionals in the United States and around the world. AHIMA is committed to promoting and advocating for high quality research, best practices and effective standards in health information and to actively contributing to the development and advancement of health information professionals worldwide. AHIMA’s enduring goal is quality healthcare through quality information. www.ahima.org