AHIMA
American Health Information
Management Association®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, please contact:
Bridget Stratton
Public Relations
312-233-1097
bridget.stratton@ahima.org

Building a Work Force for the Future

Education-focused research journal offers tools, approaches to assessing competencies

CHICAGO (Jan. 17, 2014) – The Winter 2013 issue of *Educational Perspectives in Health Informatics and Information Management* focuses on the development of the health information management profession and explores necessary changes to the education system to produce the future work force.

"The need to continually look at the competencies and student learning outcomes to ensure that we are developing the Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) workforce at the appropriate levels to meet industry needs is critical to all educators and the healthcare industry," wrote editor Rebecca B. Reynolds, EdD, RHIA, FAHIMA, chair and associate professor in the department of health informatics and information management at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, in the introduction to the issue.

"AHIMA is pleased to provide greater opportunities for educators to publish research articles of interest in the health informatics and information management educators' community," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, FACHE, CAE, FAHIMA. "These articles help us understand the challenges ahead as educational programs adapt to the demands of the future."

The issue features the following articles:

Although HIM professionals already possess foundational skills for health informatics, additional growth in HIT competencies and deep analytical skills will be required. In "The Perceived Knowledge of Health Informatics Competencies by Health Information Management

Professionals," a researcher at the College of St. Scholastica surveyed AHIMA members to determine the perceived knowledge of the emerging health informatics competencies. The survey found that the strongest predictor of HIM competency tended to be education, as well as greater years of experience in the field. The author concludes that "Education is the next step in the process of increasing HIM professionals' health informatics competencies. Educational programs must take into account the current environment in which HIM professionals will work."

The authors of "Competencies for Global Health Informatics Education: Leveraging the US Experience" propose a global curriculum framework flexible enough to operate across multiple cultures to develop competencies in health administration, the healthcare environment, and data standards, along with other related knowledge, skills, and abilities. The article discusses the potential competencies and their uses in different countries. "Common experiences and methods in the United States can provide an excellent foundation for worldwide training programs. However, each program will need to be adapted to its local environment in order to be most effective," the authors write. "Use of the core competency framework described here will provide the foundation for localized adaptation in each environment."

"Workforce Training in Electronic Health Record (EHR) Use through Community Colleges in the Delta Region: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi," describes work done by the Community Colleges in the Delta Region project developing three online HIT courses on EHR implementation, privacy and security, and system design and workflow. The article describes the collaborative process used by the Institute for Improvement of Minority Health and Health Disparities in the Delta Region, the AHIMA Foundation, Alabama State University, Louisiana Technical College, and Tougaloo College for the development and beta testing of these courses.

"Health Information Technology Employer Needs Survey: An Assessment Instrument for Workforce Planning" describes the process used to develop an assessment of HIT employer needs for the Texas HIT Workforce Development Project. "The survey tool created for this project is distinctive because no comparable survey tool for assessing HIT employer workforce needs was found," the authors note, adding that a modified version of the tool has been used in a study of rural providers' HIT workforce needs by the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho Rural Health Research Center. The tool was developed by a team of researchers at the University of Texas, Texas State University, and the University of Washington.

###

About *Educational Perspectives in Health Informatics and Information Management*
Published by the AHIMA Foundation, *Educational Perspectives in Health Informatics and Information Management* (EPHIIM) aims to advance teaching and learning in health informatics and information management and to improve workforce practices through evidence-based research and scholarly consideration.

About AHIMA
The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 71,000 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

About the AHIMA Foundation
Created in 1962, the AHIMA Foundation is a, 501(c) (3) affiliate of AHIMA. The Foundation provides an infrastructure of knowledge, research and education in the field of HIM. Its role is to envision the future director and needs of the field –and to respond with research, policy, strategies, and information that keeps HIM on the forefront. The Foundation will continue to focus its overall vision on "Better Health Information for All." www.ahimafoundation.org