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Transforming HIM Workforce Through Education
Journal of AHIMA provides update on AHIMA's Reality 2016

CHICAGO – May 5, 2014 – A growing awareness of the importance of information governance, the rapid adoption of electronic health records (EHR) and the transition to the ICD-10-CM/PCS code set are three examples of dramatic changes in the healthcare landscape.

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) anticipated the need for HIM professionals to adapt to the evolution of the profession; and the May issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* features a story, "Adapt or Disappear," that provides an update on Reality 2016, the education and industry roadmap developed by AHIMA for how the HIM professional can lead, evolve and grow.

"Reality 2016 is about giving HIM professionals more education and career options which can lead to more influence, respect and earning potential," said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. "It is designed so HIM professionals have the skills to embrace new roles that will allow them to become the leaders in areas such as health information governance."

Reality 2016 is based on AHIMA's 2007 report: *Vision 2016: A Blueprint for Quality Education in HIM*. Reality 2016 promotes the developing of higher education levels, such as master's and doctorate degree programs, to give HIM professionals a greater opportunity for higher-level, analytical leadership positions.

The architect of Reality 2016 is the AHIMA Foundation's Council for Excellence in Education (CEE), a 12-member group of HIM stakeholders, including educators, practitioners, and industry consultants, seeking to guide the HIM community through improvements in education, coursework, and curricula of associate, baccalaureate, and graduate and doctoral programs.

The article details Reality 2016's four priority areas:

- Encourage HIM professionals to obtain master's level degrees
- Enhance job opportunities for those with associate degrees through specialized tracks
- Invest in faculty development in research, EHR management, data integrity and data governance

- Increase the number of graduate-prepared HIM professionals by creating eligible pathways for doctoral-or master's-prepared individuals, including proposed post-graduate certificates.

Burning Glass, a Boston-based consulting firm, released a job report that found postings for jobs in health informatics have increased 10 times faster than healthcare jobs overall. In the report, health informatics positions included jobs involving collection, handling and processing of clinical information.

"Professionals equipped with the skills and training not only to collect and process data, but also to analyze and apply the information, will always be in demand and play an instrumental role in providing data to support quality patient care and control costs," Thomas Gordon said.

Also in this issue

- The May issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* also includes the article, "Weaving Together a Healthcare Improvement Tapestry," which highlights a learning health system (LHS), that supports an effort to share secure, high-quality data to improve patient health. At the AHIMA 2014 Convention and Exhibit, members of the Learning Health Community will share with attendees how providing timely, secure and accurate information through an LHS can improve health outcomes.

- The practice brief, "Managing the Integrity of Patient Identity in Health Information Exchange," explores how organizations can manage patient identification systems as an ongoing process and carry local quality operations into health information exchange efforts.

Read these articles and more in the May issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* or online at journal.ahima.org.

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About AHIMA
The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) represents more than 71,000 educated health information management and health informatics 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.
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