



## news

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### Information Governance ‘An Imperative’

Journal of AHIMA highlights how HIM professionals can advance information governance within their own organizations

CHICAGO – Oct. 7, 2014 – Throughout 2014, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) has urged healthcare organizations to make information governance (IG) a strategic priority.

The topic was a major focus of AHIMA’s 86<sup>th</sup> annual Convention and Exhibit in San Diego (Sept. 27-Oct. 2) and also in the October issue of the *Journal of AHIMA*.

“IG practices are key to the future of the health information management field and an imperative for healthcare organizations to use health data and information to their full benefit to improve care and reduce costs,” said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA.

In the article, “[Slow to the Information Governance Starting Line](#),” Thomas Gordon encouraged the C-suite to make IG strategy an organizational priority. “It’s easy to think it can be put on hold or maintained in one department while executives deal with other challenges, but this is a mistake,” she said in the article. “Developing a strategy should be a collaborative effort and is essential to realizing the benefits of governance.”

At Convention, AHIMA unveiled the first Information Governance Principles for Healthcare™ (IGPHC), eight guidelines organizations can use to help frame their IG programs. AHIMA also presented a Maturity Model and assessment, which correlates to the IGPHC.

Deborah Green, MBA, RHIA, AHIMA’s executive vice president/operations and Chief Operating Officer, said an important next step is to define how to use IG in an operational sense to improve processes and care.

In 2015, AHIMA plans to launch an IG pilot where healthcare organizations will take the IG Principles for Healthcare and Maturity Model and work on integrating them into actual practice. Also, another IG survey is planned, with a focus on IG job roles and how healthcare roles have evolved due to advancing emphasis on electronic information.

## Also in this issue:

- The story, "[The Way Forward](#)," looks at how AHIMA's IGPHC can be the framework for expanding or implementing IG. The eight principles – accountability, transparency, integrity, protection, compliance, availability, retention and disposition – can be remembered with the mnemonic device "A Tip Card." The author, Sofia Empel, PhD, president and chief information governance consultant at InfoCentric Strategies and a member of the AHIMA Information Governance Principles for Healthcare Task Force, wrote, "Considered collectively, the principles of IGPHC paint a picture of what good IG would look like for providers and non-providers alike, big or small, public or private. IGPHC allows an organization to get a high-level view of its IG initiatives. This perspective then can be used internally by the organization to guide its IG actions, and externally by stakeholders to judge the effectiveness of the organization's IG program."
- The practice brief, "[Information Governance Offers a Strategic Approach to Healthcare](#)," describes "the essential aim and focus of information governance as a strategic approach for managing the asset of information for healthcare organizations." The practice brief notes that IG helps organizations structure, manage and capitalize on information by "reducing risks, increasing efficiencies and achieving a competitive advantage."

Read these articles and more in the October issue of the *Journal of AHIMA* or online at [journal.ahima.org](http://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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