



## news

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### Analyzing Informatics

*Journal of AHIMA* Highlights This Emerging Focus  
for Health Information Professionals

CHICAGO – May 11, 2015 – The burgeoning field of informatics is featured in the story [“Workaday Informatics: How Healthcare is Applying Practice Informatics to Save Dollars and Lives,”](#) in the May issue of the *Journal of AHIMA*.

“As data continues to proliferate, it is incumbent upon health information management (HIM) professionals to become more familiar with informatics and develop their skills in data analytics,” said American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. “Informaticists have a wide variety of backgrounds and work experience but they all share a commitment to using data and systems processes to improve health care.”

The “meaningful use” Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program, accountable care organizations’ quality reporting requirements and the more robust data that will be generated in ICD-10-CM/PCS are all reasons why informatics is growing rapidly.

While a precise definition for informatics seems to vary, this is how Anna Orlova, PhD, AHIMA’s senior director of standards sees it. In the article, she describes informatics as a modeling discipline or modeling tool because “it explains the themes of healthcare to the computer system, to the machine. And the computer is a model.” As a result, when computer systems are designed to capture information as well as they can, then providers can use the data to make better decisions.

The story noted that while HIM professionals have been among those leading the way in trying to implement and develop interoperable systems, this area is also increasingly becoming a focus for informaticists.

David Marc, MBS, CHDA, the health informatics graduate program director and assistant professor of HIM and informatics at the College of St. Scholastica, said in the article that the line between HIM and health IT continues to blur. “A greater education around health informatics is really required, and you’re seeing that through AHIMA’s career mapping.”

## Also in this issue:

- The story, "[Scanning the HIM Environment](#)," offers insight into AHIMA's report on emerging industry trends and challenges. Some of the trends noted include how technology is reinventing the healthcare delivery system; how big data can save big dollars; the projected increase in security breaches; greater consumer control of their healthcare record; and how mHealth has the potential to revolutionize the HIM practice. HIM strategies identified to address these trends include:
  - Greater integration of healthcare information across the continuum of care
  - Processes and systems that promote understanding and use of health information by patients and families
  - Reframing the way coded data and information is used to obtain payment in a system that rewards quality and efficiency over the traditional emphasis on the quantity of services
- The practice brief, "[Assessing and Improving EHR Data Quality](#)," discusses the challenges of maintaining quality data in the EHR and provides best practice guidance for ensuring the integrity of the healthcare data.

Read these articles and more in the May 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 101,000 health information 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](http://www.ahima.org)