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AHIMA Survey: Growing Support for Making Information Governance a Priority in Healthcare Organizations

Survey examines professional readiness, opportunities for healthcare professionals to advance information governance

CHICAGO – July 28, 2015 – As healthcare professionals work to advance information governance (IG), there is growing support among leaders to make IG a priority, according to an [American Health Information Management Association](#) survey on IG conducted with Cohasset Associates, Inc.

In this second AHIMA survey to examine IG practices and readiness in healthcare, more than 40 percent of the over 1,260 respondents reported advancements in IG at their organizations in the last year. In the first survey on IG by AHIMA and Cohasset Associates released in June 2014, two-thirds of the responding healthcare professionals said their organizations did not have a comprehensive IG strategy.

A new white paper, based on the survey, examines the readiness of healthcare professionals to address the technical and strategic demands they face in an evolving IG environment, as well as the career opportunities from the advancement of IG in organizations. Complete results and analysis can be found in the Cohasset Associates | AHIMA 2015 [Information Governance in Healthcare: Professional Readiness and Opportunity](#) white paper.

“We’re pleased to see the results point to increased traction for IG in healthcare and an increase in the appointment of leadership roles to address IG in organizations,” said AHIMA’s EVP/Chief Innovation and Global Services Officer Deborah Green, RHIA, MBA. “These valuable insights on how roles essential to governance are being handled help to inform next steps in our continued work to advance IG in healthcare.”

The results indicate that 76 percent of survey participants said their overall body of knowledge and skills will support their organization’s transition to IG, illustrating that professionals involved in healthcare IG disciplines are positioned to lead IG efforts. The findings also underscore that moving IG forward requires the work of multiple disciplines including health information privacy, information integrity, data quality and the management of health records.

Additional findings of the survey include:

- 36 percent of survey respondents indicate that their organizations have designated a senior executive to sponsor IG
- 23 percent of respondents identify themselves as the chair or participant of their organization's IG oversight body
- Respondents strongly agree that communication is among the most compelling of their skills, enabling them to foster IG advancement support with leadership and staff within their organization
- 43 percent of respondents believe their IG role gives them the opportunity to be more visible and valuable to other departments in their organizations
- Through their work to advance IG, healthcare professionals experience job satisfaction; however, opportunities exist to bolster the satisfaction level

“The survey shows progress in the industry’s move toward IG, a strategic imperative for all healthcare organizations to achieve improved quality and patient safety, cost control and the overall trustworthiness of information,” said AHIMA CEO Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA. “The advancement of IG incorporates many disciplines and we encourage all healthcare professionals to take advantage of the growing body of knowledge on IG to not only further their professional development but move IG forward within their organizations.”

To continue prioritizing IG in healthcare and growing the right skills for implementation, AHIMA recommends healthcare professionals:

- Press for the formation of an IG oversight body such as an IG council, committee or working group within their organizations
- Illustrate how IG supports a healthcare organization's strategic goals by linking the investments necessary for IG advancement to improved clinical and business performance
- Establish or participate in online IG communities to learn more and share IG knowledge
- Take advantage of the growing knowledge of IG
- Illustrate expertise in IG by becoming involved in an organization's IG oversight body as a demonstration of IG credibility
- Communicate regularly IG-related achievements and needs that demonstrate benefits to the organization

More than 1,260 survey responses were received during March and April 2015. The survey targeted healthcare and industry professionals, including clinical and non-clinical leaders, officers, directors and managers, in both provider and non-provider settings. The survey was conducted with Cohasset Associates and underwritten in part by Iron Mountain and Nuance.

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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